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LETTERS

ON THE

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PRESENT STATE

OF

ENGLAND AND AMERICA:

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CONTAINING

A REVIEW

OF

SEVERAL INTERESTING PARTICULARS,

RESPECTING

THE LAWS, POLICY, TRADE, AND COMMERCE,
AGRICULTURE, MANUFACTURES,
CHARITABLE INSTITUTIONS, &c. &c.

BY THE AUTHOR OF THE
"POLITICAL CRISIS."

LONDON:

PRINTED FOR THE BOOKSELLERS.

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INTRODUCTION.

THE following Letters were written without any design of being published—merely to gratify a desire of scribbling, and to entertain a correspondent in America, who could not be displeased at the many local and frivolous descriptions, contained in many of them. The perusal of these sheets will at once convince the Reader, that they, and “**THE POLITICAL CRISIS**,” bear a near affinity to each other, and that they come from the pen of one and the same Author. This will readily account for the repetition of argument in these two publications—the one was intended for the public, the other only for the closet;—and it is hoped, that this circumstance will be admitted as an ample apology

INTRODUCTION.

gy for any similarity between them. Had the Author been apprized of the fate of these Letters, a more exact order would have been observed, and every repetition avoided. However, the pressing solicitations of some of his friends to have them published, have induced him to believe, that they are not without some merit. He has, therefore, consented to their publication, hoping for the indulgence of the candid, the mercy of the critic, and the forbearance of private revenge.

As the Author is bound to sea, these Letters are obliged to appear without his correction, in their native dress, as they were sent to his correspondent.



LETTERS,

LETTER I.

SIR,

London, Feb. 18, 1791.

I HAVE been some time debating with myself whether I should, or should not, address a few letters to you; and having at length resolved to do it, I am still undetermined what to write. But, in order to put in practice my resolution, I shall relate, in a loose, unguarded manner, whatever happens to be uppermost in my mind, without pretending to much judgement in the choice of my subject. I think, however, that you may anticipate a number of pretty long letters, provided I can find leisure and opportunity. I shall, no doubt, lay myself open to criticism; and, perhaps, some censor may take advantage of the weapons put into his hands, and make me feel the lashes of his pen.

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If you should be the critic, to whose lot this business falls, I shall gain more by your censure than I can by your praise; and as gain is the only inducement of my writing, I shall search the vocabulary of the times, and carefully examine whatever the whirl of fancy may produce, in order to amuse a poet, a critic, and a friend. It is the duty of scribblers to dwell on topics adapted to the taste and capacity of those they aim to amuse: I shall, therefore, for a while assume the character of the traveller, and endeavour to delineate the most prominent features of whatever objects attract my attention; then turn politician, and talk of the affairs of nations; become, perhaps, an antiquary, or whatever else occasion may require; and, before I have done with this epistolary correspondence, I shall probably lead you to the play-house, to see, (not unlikely,) the Comedy of Errors performed, and the dull exhibition of a pantomime. I shall not confine myself to particulars, but content myself with giving general descriptions; such are best suited to a genius like mine, which is ever on the wing, and incapable of more abstract researches into the nature and composition of things.

Your's, &c.

LETTER

LETTER II.

SIR,

London, Feb. 20, 1791.

MOST of the southerly part of the island of GREAT BRITAIN is of one solid mass of chalk, except about twelve inches in depth of a loose mould, which covers it. The chalk is supposed to make the land the more valuable; because the manure which the farmers bestow upon it, is kept from sinking too deep into the earth, and therefore it is the more fully absorbed in vegetation. We have not this advantage in AMERICA; for I think our manure seldom does any good after the first or second year of its being applied to the land, owing to the looseness and depth of the soil, so that the manure sinks below the reach of vegetable production.

THE soil in the northern parts of ENGLAND, in many respects resemble that of MASSACHUSETTS or CONNECTICUT; and, instead of chalk, it is underlaid with mines of coal, whence the people are furnished with fuel.

THE taste discovered in the cultivation of the earth, is beyond description. I wish our farmers could be persuaded to imitate it. In so doing, their pains would be amply rewarded by the increase of the fruits of the earth; for it proves to be true, that the productions of the land increase in proportion to cultivation: so that the people in AMERICA, who in general possess much land, might live with *one half*, if they would but apply as much labour to that half as they now do to the whole.

THIS may be considered as paradoxical, but it is what the farmers here assert; and, indeed, if it was not so, the kingdom would not produce a sufficiency of the necessaries of life for such a vast multitude of inhabitants. Seldom will you see any fences or walls in ENGLAND, except round the several parks, and some of the public buildings. Hedges composed of thistles and hawthorn, and other shrubbery, are cultivated with as much care as we cultivate our fruit-trees; they are cropped and trimmed with an evenness which strikes the eye with delight, so that the whole face of the country looks like a garden laid out with avenues and walks, interspersed with numberless rows of currant and gooseberry shrubs. It is exceedingly level, an advantage (as some may deem it) of which we cannot boast; and so universally cultivated, that
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it forms a most beautiful landscape, enlivened by a charming variety. Even at this period the snow does not venture to make its appearance.

I SOMETIMES imagine myself wandering through citron groves, (which exhibit more than *Arabian* sweets,) and feasting my senses on the delightful fragrance of flowers, and the beautiful appearance of vegetation; for the earth is not yet bound in fetters, so that the fields are covered with green verdure; the plowman is hard at work, and the cattle are grazing on a thousand hills! If the winter is so amusing, what must be the summer? Notwithstanding the above description be true, and though the earth yields almost spontaneously whatever can satisfy the wants of nature, and even glut luxury itself, yet there are no such pleasures as might naturally be expected to flow therefrom—they are poisoned by the badness of the air,

THE weather here, in the autumn and winter, has a dampness somewhat resembling that of our's in the spring, which engenders bad colds and consumptions in abundance; and when I am in the coffee-house, I sometimes think myself in the midst of a barking club; the continual coughing of a number of men excites the idea of mockery.

LONDON lies in the latitude with some part of CANADA; the summers are short—so short that, I am told, *Indian* corn will seldom arrive to the maturity of roasting: indeed, very few know what it is.

AT this time the sun is at such a distance, that the days are rendered extremely short; people are obliged to dine by candle-light. Perhaps the darkness is not a little increased by the smoke which hangs over this immense city, the density of the air preventing it from blowing away. The city and its suburbs are nearly thirty miles in circumference, and contain, according to the calculation of some, not much short of half a million of houses. In general, they are large and spacious, from two to five stories high, and very much resemble the buildings in PHILADELPHIA and NEW-YORK. They are much tarnished with the smoke, which exhibits an almost impenetrable cloud, thrusting its gloomy front into every habitation, reducing the splendor of modern taste to the rude appearance of *Gothic* architecture. The streets are very irregular, and, at first, puzzle strangers exceedingly. LONDON increases daily. It has already swallowed up several large towns, and bids fair to attack DEPTFORD and GREENWICH on the one hand; ISLINGTON, HACKNEY, &c. on the other: the city of WESTMINSTER was long

long since in coalescence. It is observed by some physicians, that six tenths of the people die of consumptions, or the decline. If this be true, we cannot envy the *English*, surrounded as they are with every thing which tends to dissipate the cares of life.

HEALTH is a jewel more to be prized than the glittering charms of gold; and in exchange for which, thousands would resign their splendid fortunes, and be content to walk in rags the remainder of their journey through life.

No country, perhaps, affords better roads than this. The stage-coaches run from one hundred and twenty to one hundred and ninety miles every twenty-four hours. The cost of keeping the roads in repair, is defrayed out of the toll which passengers are obliged to pay; and those who keep them in repair, are old decrepid men, whose families would suffer, were it not for the *one shilling* a day they receive for their labour. These turnpike roads afford no small revenue to government; and if such a plan was adopted in AMERICA, perhaps it might have a good tendency; I mean so far adopted as to raise a sufficiency of money to keep the roads in repair. The country is not yet rich enough to endure any considerable tax of the kind; at present, it would look too much like despotism.

THE markets in the city of LONDON are surprisingly good; they exhibit a vast variety; but the articles of sale are at least three times as dear as they are in the *American* markets: I saw a fish sold not long since for *eighteen shillings*, (and that too when they were plenty,) which would not have cost more than *eighteen-pence* in **BOSTON**.

LETTER III.

SIR,

London, Feb. 28, 1791.

HAVING remarked, in my last, on the soil, climate, &c. of this country, I shall now proceed to notice some few of its public institutions of charity, which serve to shew the wisdom of its inhabitants, and their disposition toward the poor and unfortunate: for such there are in every nation; and there are no places so thronged with them as great and populous cities.

IF benevolence were the ruling principle of mankind, how happy would they be! It however becomes predominant as civilization increases; and the day will arrive, when charity will be as extensive, as learning and the arts are universal.

BESIDES the provision which every parish has made for its poor, there are several public institutions founded, in order that every necessitous object may be provided for. Notwithstanding this, many prefer begging, because they are more at liberty, and expire for want while they are performing that solitary function.

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PEOPLE are not fond of giving much to the poor of this description, for fear of its being ill-bestowed: one cannot tell whether he is giving his money to an object of compassion, or to an object who would accept your charity, and then, to show his gratitude for it, the next moment pick your pocket. If it were possible to discriminate between the deserving and the undeserving, the former would never suffer: but now they are obliged to suffer, in consequence of the bad conduct of the latter.

ONE public institution, in particular, is rendered memorable, from the attention paid to it by men of eminence and wealth, and consequently from the benefits arising from it; I mean, CHRIST'S HOSPITAL. This hospital was founded by King EDWARD THE SIXTH, about the year 1546, as appears by the paintings and inscriptions on the walls. It is built so as to form a hollow square, and each side or wing is about five hundred feet in length. It was anciently a monastery of monks and friars; and the whole of the lands and other estates which now belong to it, were a donation from CHARLES the SECOND. It is ruled by a president, a treasurer, and upwards of four hundred governors, and each in their turn have the liberty of presentation: that is, each governor has a right in his turn to present a certain number of boys; but

but if he neglects it, he loses his right for that time, which immediately devolves to some other. There are at present upwards of one thousand boys; and in general they are between seven and fourteen years of age. Their dress is uniform, the fashion was enjoined them by their founder: a yellow petticoat and stockings, a blue frock or gown, buckled round the waist by a leathern girdle, and a white band round the neck, are the most distinguishing parts of it. Here they are maintained till at a proper age they are put out to learn some useful trade. A certain number of the best scholars are selected yearly from the rest, and sent to the university, where they are educated, and, according to the laws of the hospital, are obliged to make Divinity their chief study. As a kind of preparatory trial of the sacred function, they are daily indulged in reading prayers for the school. These young candidates of Divinity perform the task assigned them with a manly tone, and seem to manifest a propriety not always to be observed in those of riper years. When at church, they occupy the gallery by themselves; they join in the worship, and, in conjunction with the organ, perform the whole of the music. From thence they retire to the hall, and conclude their exercises of prayer and singing, previous to their supper being served to them, which they eat in public. I was once introduced by one of the governors

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to see them, and I never was more delighted in my life. Here I might moralize; but the relation carries the moral with it. To see such a multitude of innocent children chanting hymns of praise to their God, forms the most beautiful spectacle in nature. Soon, however, must they be introduced into the wide world, and their hearts, as yet uncontaminated with vice, be exposed to temptations, by which some are led into devious paths, whence by a resolution not common in youth, and which can only be inspired by an hidden, but All-seeing Power, they are redeemed; and others are hurried to an untimely fate. About fifty of these scholars are distinguished from the rest, by a star which they wear on the left breast. CHARLES THE SECOND created this distinction. They are designed solely for the navy, and no pains are spared to impress upon their tender minds the importance of nautical knowledge. To render them as perfect as possible, they are constantly taught this science; and many of them are great proficient in it before they quit this pious school. This is a fruitful nursery of heroes and of legislators; and some of the most distinguished characters of the age, manifest an honest pride in boasting their education (at least the rudiments of it) in this famous seminary. As the scholars pass through this school, they have a sort of distinction conferred on them in proportion to
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their respective merits. This excites a laudable emulation, and discourages vice. Their living is good, their bedding neat, and every necessary attendance allowed them: they resemble, in short, a large family, under the government of a wise parent. I have confined my observations to one institution only, because I am not so well acquainted with the others, of which there are great numbers not less famed than the one I have mentioned.

THERE is an institution founded on a similar principle for females; but as it is some distance from hence, I have not had the pleasure of seeing it. I am told there are more females supported by public charity than males; and I think, from the delicacy of their nature, and from the peculiar dangers to which they are exposed, partiality may be discovered to operate in their favour.

AN institution somewhat resembling the last is founded in the vicinity of LONDON, to which reformed courtezans may resort, and in which they may be maintained during life. The name of this institution is the MAGDALEN HOSPITAL. There are several hundreds belonging to it; who are well provided with apartments, a chapel, and a chaplain; but they lead a monastic life, secluded from the world; and if any one is known to offend

offend after her reception, she is immediately expelled, and never again admitted. I have been several times to their chapel on Sunday: I was exceedingly charmed with their music: they occupied the gallery, which is so constructed as to keep them from the view of the congregation. The unfortunate Dr. DODD was their late chaplain, who married one of them, and it is said they lived very happy together; indeed we may infer as much from the mention he has made of her in his last addresses to the world.

It is in vain to attempt to enumerate the various provisions made for the poor. BETHLEHEM, ST. LUKE'S, the LONDON, and LYING-IN HOSPITALS, will remain everlasting monuments of a well-applied benevolence. The former was erected by HENRY THE EIGHTH for the cure of lunatics. It was rebuilt in the year 1675, and made a receptacle for all INCURABLE and DANGEROUS lunatics. Here are two carvings, said to be the best in the kingdom. They are placed on the posts of the front gate, which opens a beautiful prospect into Moor-fields. One represents a raving madman biting his chains; the other is the figure of a fool. They are worthy observation; the expression of the countenance, and the posture of the body, give indeed a most striking appearance of reality.

THE gratitude of the country appears in nothing more illustrious than in the provision made for disabled seamen and soldiers. GREENWICH HOSPITAL, which was built for the former, stands on the banks of the Thames, about four miles below the city, and is one of the noblest fabrics of the universe. Here description fails me! This vast pile is built with stone, and covers at least four acres of ground: it has a superb chapel, to which the decrepid multitude resort for worship. The whole strikes one with surprise: it leads us to admire the bounty of a country, which stands (in this particular) unrivalled in the world.

CHELSEA HOSPITAL, where disabled soldiers find a calm retreat, is a handsome building, though not quite so elegant as the other. This also is situated on the banks of the THAMES, about three miles above the city.

To these well-furnished hospitals, more superb than any palace in EUROPE, those aged veterans, whose heads have grown grey in the service of their country, may retire in peace, and enjoy the evening of life, free from the din of war, and the pinching hand of poverty. Here they may call their little ones around them, and repeat the battles they have won; exhibit their scars and wounds, as the sad memorials of toil and

and danger ; and may thus infuse into the tender bosom of youth the spirit of heroism, and transmit to posterity an ardent pursuit of glory.

THESE hospitals are favoured with an agreeable air ; they are surrounded with gardens and walks, and look, at a distance, as if they stood in the midst of a forest. Such situations must tend to smoothe the passage of a deserving veteran through life, and even to mitigate the pangs of dissolution.

LETTER IV.

SIR,

London, March 24, 1791.

THE storms have passed over, and the weather assumes a brighter aspect. The spring has appeared in all its beauty, and the air is filled with the perfume of flowers. I have often heard it said, that the spring and the summer are much more charming here, than they are with us: but I could not conceive it, while loaded with the incumbrance of a consuming mixture of rain and smoke for three long months together. The days grow longer—the sun shines clear—and I can take my morning rambles without endangering my health. From the heights of HAMPSTEAD I can survey the city and adjacent country, and draw within my view the top of WINDSOR CASTLE. Here my friend P. occupies the house which once belonged to Sir HENRY VANE, secretary to OLIVER CROMWELL. It is pleasantly situated, and exhibits a pleasing variety. The present occupant is well suited to enjoy it, having a competency of wealth, and an agreeable family, who know how to pursue their own good and the pleasure of their friends. Affable and kind, though free from affectation, they display a knowledge of the polite arts, particularly

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ticularly that of music, in which the son and daughter are great proficients, who take an unaffected pride in entertaining their guests. Here the dull cares of life are charmed away, and the perturbed feelings of nature sink to rest at the sound of the magic spell.

BUT I will for a moment turn your attention to the Politics of EUROPE : it is an intricate subject, therefore you must not expect any abstract enquiry ; it will only be such as is suited to the capacity of a young politician. As the FRENCH REVOLUTION is the most extraordinary event which graces the annals of the present day—it will be necessary, first, to trace out some of its principal causes, and then turn our eyes to its probable consequences. This I shall do in as concise a manner as possible.

THE tyranny of the former kings of FRANCE was so grievous to the people, that they felt a disposition to better their circumstances. The arbitrary contributions levied upon them, in order to support the despicable minions of power, who had nothing to do with the State but to extort a livelihood from the poor and industrious, tended to exasperate the nation : but the ignorance and superstition of the times had long prevented the people from adopting any effectual method of relief ; and they chose rather to endure present evils, than to hazard greater ones;

ones ; for they foresaw, that to reform a prostituted government the attempt was a desperate one, and that the consequences would be fatal, should it prove fruitless.

IN the present period the Nation has become gradually enlightened ; the Rights of Men, and the extent of power bequeathed to rulers, are now more generally understood, having been made a subject of speculation by individuals : men begin to discern their rights more clearly, and to assert them. The spirit of enquiry and enterprise increaseth in proportion as times and circumstances admit ; and though no violence was committed, yet projects of reform have long occupied every thinking mind. It was not enough that their rulers had become more virtuous than their predecessors ; the same arbitrary principles, the same dangerous prerogative still remained in the government, the rooting out of which could alone ensure the safety of the people. The *American* contest proved fatal to the *French* monarchy ; for the people of FRANCE were generally informed of the principles which actuated, and the success which attended the *American* arms in support of freedom ; and as the cause was similar, it inspired them with equal hopes of enterprise. The seeds of liberty were too deeply rooted in the breasts of the officers and privates of the *French* army, who served with reputation in AMERICA ; and on their return to their native country,

country, they took pride in fanning the flame, which was already kindled. The rage of an enlightened people was not directed at their king; for never was monarch more beloved by his people; more tender, generous, and humane: it was levelled at the old established government, which was of such a texture, in every part of it, that nothing less than an utter abolition of it would mitigate the burden of slavery; and nothing less than another substituted in its room, calculated to force the growth of freedom, could in any means satisfy a nation determined to be free. This they have at last effected; and FRANCE now bids fair to be an asylum of liberty, and the careful nurse of every heroic and manly sentiment.

MR. BURKE says, that if this Revolution had been generated under any former reign, when the prince took pleasure in afflicting his people, the nation would have been less culpable: but to take advantage of a virtuous monarch, who was striving to modify the constitution of the kingdom, and to render his subjects happy, is the height of treason, and the blackest ingratitude.—I think very differently: It would *then* have looked more like rebellion; the cause would not have been viewed in the same light. Now, the world beholds a revolution founded in enlightened patriotism, and conducted without the shedding of a profusion of blood; which
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will have great influence on other nations, and point them out the road to the enjoyment of equal freedom. Mr. Fox styles the *French* Revolution, "the most stupendous fabric ever invented by human skill." Whether the *French* have taken the best method to extricate themselves from bondage, time must determine; they have not as yet finished the great work they had in view. If they should finally fail, and tyranny again rear her hydra head, that will not prove the cause to be a bad one; it will only argue the want of prudence, and show that the people were unfortunate in the plans they adopted for the redemption of their country.

THE consequences of the *French* Revolution are very extensive; they tend to sap the foundation of every government in EUROPE, and open an unbounded field of speculation. Other nations begin to think of abolishing slavery, and of assuming a rank among free-men: even ENGLAND, perhaps the most free country, and its government the best adapted to secure the liberty of the subject, of any in Europe, will one day experience a revolution; and those of AMERICA and FRANCE have so far excited the approbation of the most considerable people, that they offer their sentiments to the public with freedom, and begin to consider their own government as rather tending to the injury of

the subject, than his security. No doubt you have heard of Mr. BURKE's "Reflections on the Revolution in FRANCE;" but as it is likely you have not seen them, I will endeavour to gather some of his leading principles, from a profusion of tropes and figures, and a copious blaze of oratory.

He begins by indulging his asperity and wit. tificisms on the Revolution Society, so called, in ENGLAND. You must know, that this Society was founded in order to keep up the spirit of civil liberty, and to commemorate the Revolution which took place in the year 1688, when the Protestant succession was secured in the Brunswick line. Members of both Houses of Parliament, and many other great characters, belong to this Society. They meet every year, and hear a sermon delivered by some one of their number. In the year 1789, it fell to the share of the celebrated Dr. Price to perform this duty; and his discourse was learned, temperate, and well suited to the occasion; at the conclusion of which, he noticed the *French* Revolution, and the restoration of thirty millions of people, who spurned at slavery, and demanded liberty with an irresistible voice. This so exasperated Mr. BURKE, that he grasped his pen with the virulence of a madman, and highly reflects on the National Assembly of FRANCE, for degrading itself so much as to notice
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an Address which the Revolution Society transmitted to that body, congratulating the people of FRANCE on the happy prospects before them; and in answer to which, the President of the National Assembly compliments Dr. PRICE with the title of "THE APOSTLE OF LIBERTY." Mr. BURKE goes on to compare Dr. PRICE to HUGH PETERS, who triumphed at the death of King CHARLES the First, and soon after made his exit from the stage for his treasonable conduct; and intimates, that Dr. PRICE, like HUGH PETERS, may not die in peace *. This is uncandid; and one cannot reflect upon the wanton attack without emotion.

MR. BURKE labours to prove, that the people have no right to alter established forms: "they ought to approach them with trembling solicitude." These forms ought to be looked upon as sacred; and therefore, as monarchy was first established by dint of arms over a conquered people, the people ought now to remain quietly

* The much-lamented death of this great assertor of civil and religious liberty has happened since writing the above; and the well-merited encomiums which the learned and the great have bestowed on his memory, invalidate the illiberal remarks of a man, who, with the same breath, decries the Slave Trade, which is not yet fully proved to be abolishable consistently with either prudence or humanity, and execrates, as abominable, the virtuous exertions of an enlightened nation, to shake off a tyranny with which, for many ages, it has been oppressed.

under it: since our ancestors made laws to regulate the succession of kings, we have no right to abolish them; and the peaceable possession of the crown for so many ages, acquires, of itself, a right to enjoy it in future, which no succeeding generation can attempt to abolish, without being guilty of the greatest crime. This argument applies to all nations.—More particularly, he contends, that at the Revolution of 1688, the whole business relative to hereditary succession was established by a written law, which cannot now be repealed: he also contends for the policy and justice of an hereditary nobility, a well regulated pre-eminence being neither unnatural nor impolitic, and necessary to the public welfare; and pleads the cause of the established church, which he seems to think is in danger of being overturned, from the introduction of principles that lead directly to toleration. He maintains, that the confiscation of the estates of the *French* clergy, is partial, cruel, and oppressive. But he did not recollect, that the enormous wealth of the clergy was extorted from the poor and ignorant, under the specious pretence of purchasing prayers to relieve their souls from purgatory after death; and yearly transported vast quantities of it to his Holiness at *ROME*, without any apparent justice, except it was to prevent his bulls and excommunications, which have hitherto been fulminated to the prejudice of religion and society. He also maintains, that

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that religion ought to be established and enforced by law, because the people are not capable of chusing a religion for themselves. This is repugnant to common sense, and sounds very harsh to the ear of an AMERICAN.

MR. BURKE makes many confused remarks on the revenue of FRANCE, which only serve to lessen the public opinion relative to his ability in finance, and, after all, he is not able to draw one solid conclusion. He endeavours to prove, that the revenue is in a precarious condition, owing to the instability of the *French* government, and to the turbulent and factious spirit of its subjects, who will not rest quietly under any system whatever; that the nation will furnish a scene of anarchy and confusion, till a Counter-revolution takes place, which he seems to anticipate, accompanied with blood and devastation, and all the horrors of civil commotion. The issuing assignats, he seems to think, will prove destructive; for it is the nature of all paper-currency to depreciate—poor substitute for solid and immutable coin! Perhaps this observation is founded in reason: we have experienced the miseries of a paper system in our own country; and why should it not operate the same in other countries? Mr. BURKE bewails the indignity of deposed monarchy, and paints the distresses of the Royal Family of FRANCE in colours which were evidently meant to excite compassion, rather than to prove the reality of any premeditated

ditated cruelty; and he has fallen into such gross misrepresentations, as leaves us great room to question the rectitude of his intentions.

ACCOUNTS of the most memorable transactions of the *French* Revolution, have been published by those who were spectators of the scene; and they differ very much from Mr. BURKE, more particularly in the intended massacre of the Queen, which never existed, but in the distracted brain of the writer. Indeed, his book is so made up of contradictions, exaggerations, and fallacious conclusions; so devoid of order or connection, consisting of a miscellaneous jargon; and the whole so wrapt in the delusive shine of a lively and pompous eloquence, that one is apt to think the statesman was in a delirium, while he thought himself the wisest of mankind.

NOTWITHSTANDING all this, Mr. BURKE has some good qualities. As a speaker, he is deservedly ranked among the foremost in the nation. When he is speaking, his eyes blaze like lightning, and the bolts of eloquence roll from his tongue in rapid succession: His countenance is expressive, it indicates the sentiments he is about to utter, and flashes conviction on all around him: in short, his oratory resembles an irresistible torrent, which sweeps every thing before it. Perhaps no man understands the principles of the *English* government better than he does: His
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knowledge is extensive, and his learning universal ; but his tongue is far the best medium for communicating his knowledge : In his writing, he evidently pays more regard to elegance of diction, than to the arrangement or solidity of argument ; so that he involuntarily bewilders himself in a multitude of errors. His flowers please the fancy, but never can enlighten the understanding. He has been accused of changing his principles. That he should be a friend to the *American* Revolution, and an enemy to that of the *French*, which is founded on the same principles, and which in a great measure sprung from it, cannot be very well reconciled. Some impute this change to a royal pension, which he receives in a fictitious name : others think, that he is aiming at a peerage. The former he already enjoys ; and, if Rumour is not treacherous, the latter is not far off : So that his sudden attack upon what he once defended, is easily accounted for.

It is natural to suppose, that such a writer as Mr. BURKE would have many opposers : and I rather wonder he did not foresee that the attack would be commenced on every side, and his bulwark, however well fortified, be carried by a general assault. No less than twenty writers have appeared against him : But Dr. PRIESTLEY, and Mr. PAINE, the celebrated author of "Common Sense," may be reckoned the most considerable. The work of the former
exhibits

exhibits an excellent train of reasoning, accompanied with a suitable degree of ridicule—but it is chiefly confined to civil establishments. That of the latter is no less conspicuous for its reasoning, but far exceeds any thing I have yet met with for animation. He has fairly outdone “Common Sense.” He has styled his book, “Rights of Man.” It is one of the most nervous compositions ever produced. It has already run through eight editions, and circulates all over the kingdom. In Ireland it is read with avidity, and several editions of it have there been printed. If I had time and patience, I would attempt to epitomise it, and point out some of its most prominent features. As this is out of my power, I will only transcribe the following paragraph for your perusal: When Mr. BURKE attempts to maintain, that the “*English nation did, at the Revolution 1688, most solemnly renounce and abdicate their rights for themselves, and for all their posterity, for ever;*” he speaks a language that merits not reply, and which can only excite contempt for his prostitute principles, or pity for his ignorance.” This short extract shows the drift of both writers: but, for my part, I most heartily subscribe to the opinions of Mr. PAINE, though I believe he has carried his reasoning rather too far; for he has not only libelled the constitution in the most pointed terms (if any constitution there is, which, however, he flatly denies); but seems to question the propriety of sending to HANOVER for

for a king (and thinks it would puzzle a wiser man than Mr. BURKE to tell for what he was wanted, or what good he could do), because the Elector, in his electorate, is a despot; and infers from hence, the danger of trusting a foreign prince with the rights of *British* subjects. There is too much truth in the remark—but the assertion is bold, and perhaps TREASONABLE.

MUCH has been said, and much remains still to be said, of the various systems of government now established among men. These systems, many of them, were established in ages of ignorance and barbarism, and were then very well calculated to govern a turbulent people. But the improvements in society, and the more generous diffusion of knowledge, seem to do away the necessity of arbitrary systems, and loudly call for governments effectually calculated to secure to the subjects of them, the enjoyment of their civil and religious liberty.

IN the course of my reading and observation, I have fixed three things in my mind, as necessary to the happiness of the people in every state. *First*, The toleration of religion. *Second*, An equal representation of the people. *Third*, A total separation of Church and State in the affairs of civil government.—I beg leave to offer my sentiments on each of these particulars; and in order to avoid complexity, shall consider them in rotation.

I THINK

I THINK the Massachusetts Bill of Rights states, That man is born free and equal, endowed with certain natural rights, among which is the right of preserving life, liberty, and property. When man entered into society, he relinquished, or rather exchanged, a part of his rights, in order the more effectually to secure the remainder. Religion is one of those natural rights, *reserved* by the subject in the compact between him and society; because the execution of it was fully and amply complete in himself, without recurring to another for support, and without encroaching on the rights of his neighbour. It entirely subsisted between God and the soul, not depending on outward forms and ceremonies, nor the protection of the civil power; and no doubt every worship is acceptable which proceeds from the heart, let the method taken to express it be what it will. The ancient policy of Europe was well directed, when it prohibited certain modes of worship; for ignorance was then so prevalent, that people were easily roused to acts of barbarity and murder, by designing men, who veiled their pernicious projects under the cloke of religion. But now, that the *cause* of those prohibitory laws is done away, the *effect* ought no more to exist; yet it does exist, to the manifest prejudice of almost every kingdom in EUROPE. It was this which enabled the clergy to usurp such extensive authority in matters of Church and State; and it is now their interest to pursue the same system of policy, for a change

change of government must inevitably abridge their prerogatives, and deprive them of an abundance of wealth. Considering the moral depravity of our nature, it is not uncharitable to suppose, that the exalted clergy study more to preserve their influence with the hirelings of State, and to covet an accumulation of riches, than they do to discharge the duty of their calling. They strive to shackle the minds of men with certain tenets and modes of worship, which they do not believe, merely to be thought of consequence; and then maintain them with fire and sword, lest their insincerity should appear by a careless neglect of what they at first propagated. No set of people are more fertile in expedients; the sacredness of their character renders them unsuspected by the weak, while the few discerning are suffered to share the plunder. Plots and combinations grace the tenor of their lives; and they have, more than any other class of men, the power of corrupting the welfare of states. Power is a jewel which they embrace with greedy arms; and the nature of the *English* constitution is such, that vast numbers are permitted to enjoy it. Many wish the day to come, when they shall be delivered from priestcraft, the bane of all monarchical governments. The clergy in AMERICA are rendered respectable by their dependence; and as they are totally excluded from the affairs of State, they have opportunity of reforming the manners of the people, thereby making them good subjects,

jects, which seems to constitute the principal duty of the ministers of religion. If their example should ever be copied in EUROPE, freedom and concord would be established on the ruins of war, and future generations be blessed with the reign of peace.

THE present representation of the people in ENGLAND is partial and oppressive. Some towns of small note are allowed to send members to Parliament; while many others, at least ten times as large, are prohibited from sending any. This inequality has arisen from the unavoidable change in human affairs, against which no human prudence could provide. At the time the representation of the people was first established, it is to be supposed that it was equal. Since that period, some of the largest towns which then existed have dwindled away; and others, much inferior, have increased in population: So that, the same law still operating, there arises an evil, which cannot be remedied, unless a total reformation takes place, the old regulations being totally abrogated, and new ones substituted, more congenial to equal liberty. Had all parts of the kingdom acquired a proportionable increase of population, the representation of the people would not have been a theme of complaint.

THERE are, however, other existing evils. Merit is seldom consulted in the choice of men who are to

are not allowed any pay, it follows of course, that a man in moderate circumstances, let his virtues be what they may, will never join that body, unless he has some prospect of being amply repaid. Men who have no hopes of reward, will sometimes, perhaps, think themselves justified in embezzling from the public chest; and whenever this happens, we may readily conclude, that, in the end, the State will not be the richer. As the constitution now stands, any man may purchase the right of representation of a town or borough, in a distant part of the kingdom, and represent a number of men, of whose persons and circumstances he is wholly ignorant. Most of the Members of Parliament come in by purchase; and from hence we may fairly conclude, that the nation is not equally represented. Besides, those who come in by vote are no better, for almost every man's vote is purchased; and he who has the most money to corrupt the people, is generally sure of success. I shall add to this part of my subject, an observation of Dean SWIFT, who was no despicable politician. "That there is no
" truer maxim in government than this, that
" the possessors of the soil are the best judges
" of what is for the advantage of the king-
" dom." Besides, he contends, that when Parliaments are not annual, but are suffered to have a longer duration, "There grows up a
" commerce of corruption between the ministry

D

" and

“ and the deputies, wherein they both find their
“ accounts, to the manifest danger of liberty.”

The Members of Parliament possess very little landed interest; their property is lodged in the funds, for which they pay no taxes; so that the burdens they lay upon the country do not reach them. Direct taxes come heavy upon the former, while the legislator regularly receives his dividends, without trouble or expence.

THE connection of Church and State now comes to be considered. It is manifestly true, that in the House of Peers, which partly consists of a set of pampered Bishops, a combining principle is for ever at work. Though each party has its interest, they both dip from the same fountain. Hand in hand they seek to enrich themselves; and when one party proposes a favorite scheme, the other will be sure to advocate it, provided a similar friendship, or acquiescence, can be relied on; and so turn and turn about.—But enough of this.

THE *English* government is an expensive one; and, indeed, so are all governments, which are founded in conquest, and partake of feudal establishments. People have but lately been led to discover a cheaper mode; and now they see it practised around them with success, they begin to think of adopting it. In order to do this,
they

they must overset the old forms which Mr. BURKE deems as sacred and inviolable; and which he reverences, because they are old. The *English* nation is uncommonly rich; and hitherto its credit has exceeded that of any other in EUROPE; and why? it may be asked; because the government has taken care to discharge the interest of its public debt. The people think their property cannot be more secure than in the public funds, from whence they regularly receive their interest, and they look upon the kingdom as mortgaged to pay it. But it must be remembered, that, in order to discharge the interest, taxes are exceedingly high, and an excise levied on not only what people eat and drink, but on their windows, for the particles of light, in proportion as they receive it; on their rides, and on their walks, to raise a revenue sufficient to defray the amazing expences of government. If it be true, as is maintained at the present day, that the national debt increases a million yearly, notwithstanding these heavy taxes; the day must come, and that shortly, when the payment of interest must cease, and with it the public credit. Should this ever happen, which God forbid! a revolution cannot be prevented; and that day is the more to be dreaded as the nation contains a spirited nobility, who will endeavour to support the old established forms in opposition to the people; which will be likely to create an effu-

sion of blood. Revolutions have now become so common, that people begin to grow jealous of their rulers, and every public act is considered as an addition to the burden already imposed. The disparity is so great between the *ruler* and the *ruled*, that the latter seem willing to suppose there is a separate interest existing between them. They wish to have slavery done away ; but before this can take place, the instruments of it must be abridged of their power. Force is abhorrent to the feelings of an enlightened people ; but their voice is the voice of GOD, and cannot be resisted ! They are for lopping off, by degrees, the infectious limbs of an arbitrary government, and reducing it on a level with other free governments.

STANDING armies in times of peace not only create a vast expence, but are maintained as the hirelings of slavery. I always admire the sentiments of Dean SWIFT, when he speaks of government, and cannot help citing him as an authority of great weight. On this subject, he remarks, *That he had a mortal antipathy against standing armies in times of peace, because he considered them as servants hired by the master of the family for keeping his own children in slavery ; and because he conceived that a Prince who could not think himself secure without mercenary troops, must needs have a separate interest from that of his subjects.* From the Americans
let

let the world take example; their government affords a perfect model, and unfolds to mankind the genuine trait of a great and magnanimous people. The imposts which they have laid on superfluous articles are very small, and not even felt by the purchaser; and notwithstanding this, at the close of the two first year's experience of the new government, they had remaining in the treasury, after discharging all current expences, above a million of dollars, towards discharging the public debt. The unlocated lands will soon be disposed of, and their sale will prove of infinite advantage to the states. The revenues will yearly increase, as it comes better established: For new regulations will no doubt be adopted to secure the better collection of it, and to prevent the nefarious practice of smuggling: so that in a very few years, that viper of State, the public debt, will be annihilated.

In fine, the progressive improvements in society, relative to modes of government, and a more general diffusion of knowledge, seem to argue some mighty change. The fire is kindled, and instruments are not wanting to fan it, and make it devour the despotic systems of the world. The Spanish ministry has prohibited the circulation of knowledge. I mean such, as tends to explain the present revolution, and the happy effects accruing from a just and equal government.

vernment. The Monarch trembles for fear of a revolt ; and his very crown is suspended upon the dreary poise of doubtful expectation. For, notwithstanding every effort to prevent the spreading of these events, the people begin to be roused, and to entertain a relish for the enjoyment of their natural rights, and to reflect with horror upon the assumption of power, which admits of no modification ; and feel that happiness alone can be obtained by the extirpation of tyranny, and the establishment of civil and religious liberty. AMERICA may justly claim the honor of first treading the dubious way, and of opening to other nations a fair prospect of that temple, to which they begin to look with reverence and respect. Her credit increases ; her glory brightens ; her power and boundless territory, joined to population and health, seem to argue, that she will one day reign empress of the world.

THUS far I have played the politician, or whatever else you are pleased to call it. But I shall relieve your patience by subscribing myself,

Yours, &c.

LETTER

LETTER V.

S I R;

LONDON, April 2, 1791.

IN a former letter * I mentioned several public institutions of charity; and that few individuals were liable to suffer for want. Beggars are apt to impose upon the benevolent; and one can seldom tell whether he is bestowing his charity on a proper object or not. An instance lately occurred, which gave me much pain. As I and my friend were walking, not long since, over the fields between LONDON and HACKNEY, we were accosted by a beautiful female, about sixteen. The manner in which she addressed us, very much overpowered me. "Pray gentlemen give me a penny—I am in great distress—my mother lies in yonder cottage, almost dead for the want of something to eat." At that moment the milk of human kindness flowed in my veins, and compassion sat depicted on my brow. I was instantly determined to relieve her wants; though I was as firmly resolved to be satisfied whether they were actually real or only imagi-

* Letter III.

nary, and she an imposter. I followed the damsel to her cot, which at once reminded me of the one, so admirably pictured in GOLD-SMITH's ballad of the Hermit——

The wicket opening with a latch.

When I entered this solitary mansion, how was I astonished! It was the abode of misery: not a ray of comfort darted itself through a broken window, or the still more shattered walls, to cheer the children of adversity. I have often thought, that a few such scenes as this in our lives, are beneficial to our natures. It is a luxury to do good, far superior to the blandishments of sense, or the more gay delusions of the voluptuary. The afflictions of our fellow-creatures, when rightly considered, tend to sublimiate the mind, and to render the heart more susceptible, and the more likely to be melted at the woe of others. I stood gazing for some time, not daring to speak. The old woman lay on a heap of straw, and was covered with the dirty fragments of a blanket. Near her sat an aged cat, which, by her disconsolate phiz, and long beard, seemed to share the poverty of the mistress—almost expiring with hunger; yet seeming to repine, as if conscious of the fate of the little family. I asked the mother some questions; but perceiving her unable to speak, I gave the daughter, who was bathed in tears, some money, and ordered her
to

to send for a physician, and immediately quitted this receptacle of distress and poverty; but not without promising that I would shortly call again.

THE evening was serene and pleasant, and the delightful fragrance of flowers was borne on every breeze. But you may well suppose, that, after this melancholy prospect of human misery, I was not very well prepared to enjoy the excursions of an hour. We however jogged on, mute and sad, discoursing upon the painful scene we had just witnessed, when we suddenly heard a female voice from beneath a shade:

——“ HE has gone and left me,” cried the fair one, “ and I know not where—he has left
“ me to weep and to languish out my life in
“ misery. O that I knew where to find his
“ grave! there would I lay me down and
“ expire upon the humble sod. But, alas!
“ perhaps he was denied the common rites of
“ burial; he may have been mangled to death
“ by those who had rather leave his body
“ above the ground to be devoured by voracious animals, than to wrap it in a covering, and suffer it to moulder in the silent
“ tomb.”——

“ FOR whom art thou mourning, pretty
“ maid ?” said a stranger, who had also been
gazing

gazing, undiscovered, at the weeping fair, during her plaintive soliloquy.

——“MY dear HARRY;” answered she, starting with surprize, “he went to AMERICA, “and was there taken prisoner, and I have not “heard from him since. He was all friendship “to me; we both loved—here is a token of “his affection, (pulling a beautiful miniature “from her bosom and tenderly kissing it,) here “is a pledge of the sincerity of his heart; it “shall be buried with me in the same grave.”

HERE she paused—her tears prevented utterance—her passions and feelings were tumultuous, and too poignant to admit the power of speech. After a few moments interval, she again proceeded. “MY dear HARRY and myself had but one heart. We contracted an “intimacy in our childhood, and it did not fail “to increase with our years. My pappa disapproved of our connection, because HARRY “was poor. At length we parted; but our “attachment was too great to suffer a total “separation. We resolved to quit our friends “and kindred, and to endure poverty, that we “might be happy; rather chusing to meet the “difficulties of an ungrateful world, and enjoy “the sweets of reciprocal friendship, than to “roll in affluence, and eat the bread of “affliction. But Heaven has taken him away,
“and

“ and I am left alone to perish: my vindictive
“ father will not receive me—the cold earth
“ is my bed—and the canopy of the sky my
“ covering. I long to be going.—O that I
“ was with him!—and then”——

“ AH! pitiful maid,” interrupted the compassionate stranger, with some emotion, “ would
“ the sight of thy HARRY make thee happy?”

“ YES,” cried she, sighing, “ it would, because he loved me—he told me so—he never
“ would deceive me. But, alas! he is dead,
“ or I should have heard from him before now.
“ Fortune lavishes her favors on some—to others
“ she proves unkind. Since the Fates have
“ decreed the unavoidable misfortunes—and
“ since it is the will of Providence to cut us off
“ in our youthful days; I must acquiesce, and
“ say, *the will of the Lord be done*. Nevertheless, the few moments I have to live, shall be
“ devoted in shedding tears of sorrowful friendship, and in wreathing a tablet of flowers,
“ which may ere long be placed upon the urn
“ (if any he may have) that contains the precious dust of HARRY!”

THE stranger was the lover!—he confessed it—he clasped her in his arms, and thus exclaimed: “ I am thy HARRY who was lost;
“ but now lives to hush the rising sighs of his
“ lovely

“ lovely MELIA. Pardon my silence: I little
“ thought of finding thee, in one of my moon-
“ light rambles, amid the dreary shade, clad in
“ the robes of despair. Forgive me, Heaven!
“ I live to make my MELIA happy!”

THE bosom is pained at the view of this tender scene. It is enough to remark, that the powerful conflict of contending passions, rushing like an impetuous torrent through the soul, subdued every faculty—they fainted in each others arms—they recovered—they are happy.

THUS much of tragedy. And now, my friend, after such a ramble, attended with such a comical adventure, you may readily imagine I was anxious to return. I immediately bent my course towards my lodgings, which I reached precisely at twelve o'clock, not a little surprised at the singularity of the incidents I had met with.

Yours, &c.

LETTER

LETTER VI.

SIR,

LONDON, April 10, 1791.

I SHALL fill up this letter with a descant on the works of art. • I do not mean to paint the beauties of creation, and to lead you, like HERVEY, among the stars, and loose you in utter profusion : I shall only show you some remains of antiquity, and such things of a more modern date, as have fallen under my observation ; such only as can, in some measure, fill up the *vacuum* of an idle hour. As lively description is a task to which my ability is not competent, I shall only give you some of the out lines of a few things, which would be deemed curiosities by an inhabitant of the new world : You must know, however, I am not altogether a careless observer, but am bent to enquire into the foundation of things, rather to be contented with a superficial view of them, though I am too lazy to delineate these enquiries on paper. You may think me a pedant for this observation ; but I cannot convince myself I am wrong. Perhaps, like the rest of mankind,

mankind, I am blind to my own follies, railing at others for vices, which are most predominant in my own breast, and daily practised without shame or remorse.

THE first thing of any consequence that attracted my attention, after my arrival in ENGLAND, was the famous Cathedral at CANTERBURY, which I visited on my way from DEAL to LONDON. It was founded soon after the invasion of JULIUS CÆSAR, and bears all the marks of *Roman* architecture. It is large and *Gothic*; and adorned with sculptures and paintings in the manner of the ancients. This huge pile is upwards of five hundred feet in length, divided into many apartments; and the whole supported by several rows of pillars, or columns, which rise to an immense height. I entered this solemn temple with a kind of awful respect. In this building, at the foot of the altar, THOMAS A BECKET was murdered; and our conductor pointed to some red spots in the pavement, which is believed to this day to be the blood of that venerable prelate. His statue is erected by the altar, and a piece of the contaminated marble was cut out and sent to the temple of ROME, and there preserved as a sacred relique. Here some of the ancient kings, queens, and many bishops, were interred, and superb statues erected to their memory; such as that of EDWARD the Fourth, and his queen; that of the BLACK PRINCE, whose

whose shield, sword, coat of mail, and his whole armour, are still preserved entire, and exhibited as a public curiosity. The ruins of an old monastery still remain, which recall to our minds the pious superstition of our ancestors, and by contrasting the past with the present age, we discover an amazing alteration in our policy,—in our modes of thinking,—in our manners, and in our worship; but this alteration is for the better, and proves our abhorrence of superstition, and our veneration for reason, on which is founded the Law and the Prophets.

LONDON, and its vicinity, affords a catalogue of curiosities to an *American*; the detail of which would be laughed at by an *European*, who are as familiar with them as you are with those about you, which indeed are not many. WESTMINSTER ABBEY somewhat resembles the Cathedral at CANTERBURY, with this difference, however, that the former is less *Gothic*; therefore it does not fill the mind with equal reverence, but far exceeds the latter in its embellishments. Under this structure, most of the great personages of ENGLAND lie interred; and the walls and apartments are adorned with their venerable statues, which recal to the mind the excellency of their originals. Here the hero and statesman share one common lot; and the historian and poet are suffered to sleep in some sequestered corner of this *Gothic* edifice.
Among

Among them are many of your old acquaintance, such as SPENCER, SHAKSPEARE, MILTON, DRYDEN, GAY, &c. &c. But no statue appears more majestic than that of the late Earl of CHATHAM. It is placed in a conspicuous part of the Abbey: His countenance is full of fire; his eyes blaze like meteors, with one hand extended in the act of speaking. On viewing this animated marble, my muse began to operate, which indeed seldom happens: I took out my pencil, and wrote the following lines:

By virtue prompt, great CHATHAM rul'd debate,
And taught the bolts of eloquence to roll;
Tho' tyrants strove his ardor to abate,
He flash'd conviction on the doubting soul.

His sable hearse, with melancholy pace,
Advanc'd amid the throng of mould'ring peers;
Their relics mov'd to give an ample space
For him who dy'd, and burst a kingdom's tears.

His death was felt, so deep it made the wound,
That keen despair had seiz'd the common weal,
Had not his son, with equal glory crown'd,
Display'd those virtues, stamp'd with CHATHAM's seal.

While ALBION's sons weep o'er the patriot's urn,
And slightly tread where rests the sacred dust,
They see unnumber'd lamps of glory burn
Around the sculptur'd marble of the just!

In the middle passage of the Abbey, a marble statue is erected, by the express command of his

his Majesty, to perpetuate the memory of the unfortunate ANDRE. But some prostituted wretch has greatly defaced the representation, by beating off the head and right arm of General WASHINGTON. The Abbey presents nothing more curious than the wax-work. The queens ELIZABETH and ANN, CHARLESTheSecond, and the Earl of CHATHAM in his old dress, and the young Duke of BUCKINGHAM, so much celebrated by POPE, and his mother and little sister, appear in full perfection. Two coffins, with their contents, are still preserved above ground, one of which (I think) is one of the EDWARD's, whose body was arrested for some cause after his death, and was not suffered to be conveyed to the tomb. I have seen various other ancient buildings, such as the Charter-house, Monasteries, Churches, &c. &c. but this is the most noted: Our conductor informed us, that it was upwards of fourteen hundred years old. Here I might pause for a moment and moralise: There never was a better situation for it; the moral might be useful. The mouldering state of this edifice, joined to an awful grandeur which it reflected, reminded me of the moral debility of our natures, and of the change of all mutable objects. Like them we rise,—like them we decay,—and like them, too, we drop into silent oblivion. This material system is rapidly passing away; and the time is near at hand when not a particle of this mighty globe shall be found

amid the multifarious deluge of conflicting elements. The local inscriptions on the marble tomb, though half blotted out with age, in silent whispers, seemed to warn me of my dissolution, and pointed to those once animated bodies under them, as exhibiting a serious admonition. Here I beheld an illustrious race of men, who once acted a conspicuous part on the great theatre of human affairs; the fomentors of revolutions; the authors of happiness and of misery, resigned to the stern decree of the king of terrors.—But I must return to my subject, else you will think me in too serious a mood, or, in other words, mad with religion.

THE TOWER comes next in order to be mentioned. It was founded by WILLIAM the Conqueror; but it has received great additions by succeeding princes, and was originally intended, and still is kept, as a place of safe confinement for state prisoners. It is a mile in circumference; and inclosed by a ditch of about thirty feet deep, and something more than eight rods wide, into which the tide flows and ebbs, and is strongly walled. It is guarded by several hundred soldiers, and fortified with a train of heavy artillery.—In it the Mint is established, as a place of perfect security; as also the King's Crown. It is a repository of spare cannon, and other implements of war. The Armory contains one hundred thousand stand of arms, and

and a proportionable number of swords and pistols; all of which are put in a situation to attract the eye, and to display the taste and ingenuity of those who have the care of them. One groupe is so disposed as to form a figure of a serpent, the second that of an hydra, the third that of the King's arms, the fourth that of some curious monster, and so on, decorated with the warlike instruments of various public characters, placed in every possible direction, and ornamented with muskets and pikes; the former were taken in the late Scottish rebellion, the latter from some nation before the use of arms was discovered, nearly as old as the *Norman* conquests; some indeed are of much greater age. Add to these, we were shewed the Pole-ax of an ancient general, as also several hundred pikes, made in imitation of those of the *Roman* phalanx. In another apartment, we viewed all the crowned heads of ENGLAND, from WILLIAM the Conqueror, down to GEORGE the Third, mounted on horse back, in complete armour, as large as the life, surrounded by their guards. QUEEN ELIZABETH is seen in wax-work, with one hand on the saddle of her horse, in the act of mounting; drest in the armour she wore when she reviewed her army at the period the kingdom was invaded by the *Spanish* Armada. We saw many other curiosities too numerous to mention, such as some engines and screws, which were made to screw the thumbs, and to

contract the bodies of heretics into any shape, in order to extort from these victims a disclosure of their wealth, and confessions of faith : And above all, the ax which took off the head of poor ANN BOLLEYN, the fate of whom I have often read with a mixture of pity and indignation—“ execration half mingled with my prayer :” the first cannon ever made (and a curious thing it is) ; the place where Mr. LAWRENCE was confined, and where the two prince EDWARDS were smothered. The TOWER is the repository of a number of wild beasts, such as a lion and lioness, a tyger and tygress, a leopard and leopardefs, and a hyena, a most ferocious animal ; one bear from AMERICA, another from INDIA, of a huge bulk, and another from GREENLAND, which is a white one ; together with a variety of smaller animals. They appeared to be very friendly to their master, but they would utter a hideous growl at strangers, and seemed anxious to burst through the iron grates to devour them. At the entrance of the TOWER, as well as at most places of curiosity, we were obliged to give our conductor a fee, and a pretty exorbitant one.

THERE are some very fine modern buildings ; such as SOMERSET-HOUSE, where most of the public offices are kept : It forms a hollow square of great magnitude, and the expences in erecting it are almost beyond computation. The
MANSION-

MANSION-HOUSE, in which the Lord Mayor resides, is a magnificent building, and well suited to the dignity of the office of mayoralty. The BANK, where, perhaps, there is one of the greatest deposits of specie in the universe, is a square building, and built of huge stone. But none are more noted than ST. PAUL'S. At a great distance from LONDON, one may see its astonishing dome rising majestically above each lofty spire, exhibiting a sublime spectacle, amid the clouds of smoke, which hang over this great city. I shall be somewhat particular in the description of ST. PAUL'S, not only because I think it equal to any modern edifice, not even ST. PETER'S at ROME excepted, but because my opportunity of observation has enabled me to gratify my curiosity. It seems to have been built more for magnificence than for any real service. It is composed of amazing large stone, cemented with running lead, and with lime, and exhibits a beautiful piece of architecture, though very black, owing to its extreme height, and central situation (standing on Ludgate-hill), which exposes it to the smoke of the city. This towering edifice was forty years in building; the expences of it were defrayed by a tax on coal, and cost 1,500,000 l.; or as another account states, which is the most probable, 810,380 l. Sir CHRISTOPHER WREN was the architect, who begun it in the year 1675, and lived

to see it finished in the year 1715. This vast fabric is surrounded at a proper distance with 2500 strong iron palisades. In the era of the grand west front, on a pedestal of excellent workmanship, stands a statue of Queen ANN, in whose reign the building was finished, with proper decorations. The figure of the vase represents BRITANNIA with her spear; GALLIA, with a crown in her lap; HIBERNIA, with her harp; and AMERICA with her bow; all the workmanship of the same ingenious statuary who performed the rest. The extent of the ground plat on which ST. PAUL's stands, is two acres, sixteen perches, twenty-three yards, and one foot. In the body of the cathedral there is a small chapel, where worship is performed. This being almost the only apartment in the lower part of the building, there is a most spacious walk on the marble pavement; on the middle of which one may discover the smallest cavity of the Dome, which rises to an immense height over this stupendous pile. There is a curious whispering gallery, three hundred and thirty-six steps from the bottom, which forms an exact circle over the most conspicuous part of the opening below, and seems to have grown out of chance rather than invention. Our conductor gave us a description of some of the principal parts of the building, in a whisper, which was distinctly heard upwards of one hundred

dred and forty feet; he put his mouth close to the wainscoat, or side, and the noise came round to us in a circular direction, and resembled a voice in the wall behind us close to the ear. The shutting of the gallery door produces a noise as loud as the bursting of a cannon; as also that of the geometrical stair-case. The inside of this structure is five hundred feet long, and two hundred and eighty-two wide;—its whole circuit is two thousand two hundred and ninety-two feet—its height within, from the centre to the cross, is four hundred and four feet—the circumference of the dome is four hundred and twenty feet—the circumference of the ball is six feet—from the ball to the top of the cross is thirty feet—the circumference of the pillars, or columns of the several porticoes, is twelve feet—their height is forty-eight feet—to the top of the west pediment, under the figure of St. Paul, is one hundred and twenty feet—the tower of the west front is two hundred and eighty-seven feet—the number of steps, from the bottom to the top, is six hundred and sixteen—the great bell weighs eleven thousand four hundred and seventy-four pounds—the clapper one hundred and eighty pounds—the circumference of the bell is thirty feet, but it is never rung, or tolled, except on the death of some of the royal family—the minute hand on the clock weighs seventy-five pounds—the length

of the hour hand is five feet, and five inches—its weight is forty-four pounds—the circumference of the dial is fifty-seven feet.—ST. PAUL'S is sometimes very serviceable on public days. The King, on recovering from his late indisposition, went there to worship, in order to gratify the curiosity of the people, who were anxious to behold their sovereign, and to return thanks for the continuance of his life. On this occasion, it is said, the streets were immensely crowded. Those who could not crowd into the church, purchased a seat in some of the houses near it, in order to see the King as he passed and repassed, for which they paid from five to ten guineas. The charity schools in and about London meet at ST. PAUL'S once a year, where they sing *Te Deum*, and hymns and anthems—have a sermon delivered, and a collection made for them. I once saw upwards of ten thousand poor children in this collection, and they formed one of the most beautiful spectacles in nature. They sung various tunes before and after the sermon; and such a multitude of voices, all cording, enraptured the spectators, many of whom burst into tears on the occasion. Let those who are strangers to the softer feelings of the soul, once behold this scene, and acknowledge their bosoms moved by an institution which does honour to human nature.

THE MONUMENT is worthy of observation. It was erected to perpetuate the great fire of LONDON, which happened in the year 1666, and which was at last extinguished near LONDON-BRIDGE, where the monument now stands. It is two hundred and two feet high; and an elegant writer supposes it to exceed all the obelisks and pillars of the ancients. There is a stair-case which leads to the top of it, from whence the country may be viewed at a great distance. The top is fashioned like an urn, with a flame issuing from it.

THE ROYAL EXCHANGE, supposed to be the greatest baize in the world, cost 80,000 l. sterling in building: It is adorned with the statues of eighteen kings, four queens, and two knights; one of which is Sir JOHN BARNARD, late governor of the then MASSACHUSETTS' COLONY. GUILD HALL, the OLD BAILEY, WESTMINSTER-HALL, &c. would require more time than I am possessed of to describe them.

THE palace at St. JAMES's, where the King resides in winter, and CARLTON-HOUSE, near adjoining, which belongs to the PRINCE OF WALES; as likewise the Palace in KENSINGTON GARDENS, where the late King expired, are all noble buildings, though some of them look very old. KENSINGTON GARDENS are very rural; in which
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the nobility and gentry, as well as all other decent dressed people, perambulate every Sunday, during the spring and summer seasons. They are about four miles in circuit. The palace was originally the seat of Lord Chancellor FINCH, afterwards Earl of NOTTINGHAM. It was purchased of him by King WILLIAM, who greatly improved it. He caused a royal road to be made to it through ST. JAMES and HYDE Parks. Queen MARY much enlarged these gardens. Great improvements were made by her sister Queen ANNE. She was so pleased with the place, that she frequently supped, during the summer and autumn, in the green-house. Queen CAROLINE finally completed the design. She extended the gardens, and brought what is called the SERPENTINE river into them. She took in some acres of HYDE Park, on which she caused a mount to be raised. Walks and avenues are made in every part of them; and, notwithstanding they are so extensive, I have seen them so crowded as to render them it difficult to pass and repass. The gateways are always thronged with pick-pockets, who are sure to have your money and watch unless well secured: such a multitude of people crowding through the passage *in* and *out* of the gardens, operate very favourable for these pests of society. They once took fifteen shillings out of my
waistcoat-

waistcoat-pocket, in the middle of the day, without my knowledge, and at another time, they had dexterity enough to take my handkerchief. They also crowd around the Theatres; and seldom a night passes but some lose their watches, and even the ladies very often lose their pockets, with all their contents.

HAMPTON-COURT, WINDSOR, and KEW-GARDENS, are the most magnificent of any of the royal buildings. The Royal Family manifest a partiality for WINDSOR, which is about twenty miles from the city, and generally reside there in summer.

RICHMOND-PARK, and your old friend POPE's GROTTTO, at TWICKENHAM, deserve to be remembered: They are both occasionally visited by the fashionable world; the former for its height and salubrity; the latter on account of its beauty, as well as for the respect due to the illustrious Bard, who once inhabited it.

HAMPTON-PALACE was founded by WILLIAM and MARY, and is about fourteen miles from LONDON. It contains many curiosities; such as a set of chairs, the work of Queen MARY, elegantly embroidered; they are of a curious construction, and somewhat sullied with age. Here are
many

many pieces of curious painting, done by the greatest artists; such as a representation of the fight between ALEXANDER THE GREAT, and DARIUS the *Persian* king, when the former forced a passage, with his army, over the GRANICUS, though opposed by a numerous host on the opposite bank. This exhibits all the fury so characteristic of the *Macedonian* monarch, and the dreadful conflict which took place on the occasion; as also his battle with the *Cythians*, when he captured the great PORUS, their king, mounted on an elephant of an uncommon size. This painting extends over one whole side of a large room in the palace, which is upwards of sixty feet in length. Other paintings, of less labour, are to be seen; such as a fight at sea, which is a very lively description—the clouds of smoke—the broken masts and spars, and the hulks of ships half buried in the wave, and men taking to their boats to save themselves, are extremely natural: Such also as the kings, queens, and some other great personages, of almost every nation. The gardens and green-houses are curious. I saw them in the month of *February*, and, to my surprise, beheld a vast variety of plants and flowers all in their bloom; besides orange and lemon trees, bending with fruit; as also grapes and limes in abundance. These were in the green-house. The gardens afford some fine fountains, the water of which is brought

brought from the river under ground by means of a pipe, and is thrown in steady streams to a prodigious height. We were conducted into what is called the maze, out of which we could not find our way. It was formed on purpose for a puzzle, and it answers the purpose to perfection. It is made with shrubbery and small trees, and so placed as to produce an infinity of windings, somewhat resembling the passage into TROY, which I have often seen sketched, as a matter of curious invention. The gardens are very extensive, containing beautiful trees of all sorts, placed so as to cause a variety of walks to extend in almost every direction. Here you may see an artificial pond of near half a mile in length; and great numbers of deer and other game.

BUSH-PARK lies the opposite side of the wood from the palace, of which LORD NORTH, though blind, is ranger. This office is a mere sinecure, calculated to afford livings to ministers and favorites of about two thousand pounds *per ann.* without being of the least advantage to the public: For the game, the several parks, as well as the country, produce, is too sacred to please, or to satisfy the hunger of the unhallowed poor: It is reserved by the laws for the sport and luxury of the great!

You

You must not think the preceding true in every particular, though I have aimed at truth; or that it includes one-tenth of what may be deemed curious: The former is doubtless deficient; but it would require more than a volume to record even the names of the latter. I have spun this letter to such a length, that I am obliged to restrain the inclination I have to proceed till some future opportunity; and am,

Your's, &c.

LETTER

LETTER VII.

SIR, London, June 12, 1791.

THE time has now arrived when nature appears most exuberant. Cherries, goof-berries, and green-pease, flow into the markets with a plenteous effusion. I have just returned from HAMPSHIRE, and the country through which I passed, was covered with mown grass; it now being the midst of hay-harvest. The air and prospects were happily calculated to exhilarate my mind, after enduring, for some months, the torpidness of the city.—But enough of this—and now to the point—

As you pursue the thread of my correspondence, you must remember this, that I relate nothing material, except what has fallen under my observation; therefore, as I have no connection with the more fashionable world, I mean the nobility, perhaps I may only glance at some of them, as a *low buffoon* sometimes glances at a fine lady, without any hopes of satisfying his ardent propensity, and hugs the shadow

shadow instead of the real object.—This is a curious metaphor! But to proceed.

DURING the winter season, I am told, the plays are the most considerable diversions which the fashionable circles attend to: For, at that season, their country gardens, their flower beds, and rural walks, amid delightful groves, and the melodious singing of birds, afford but a dull prospect, when compared with their summer bloom: And indeed I believe it. I never was at the Theatre but I saw a host of dukes, earls, marquisses, bishops, duchesses, and the LORD knows who. Among the rest, the Royal Family often partake of these diversions, and then one is in danger of being crowded to death. I have seen them at the theatre several times, and though I went very early, I found it difficult to get in; or rather, more properly (as some call it) *screwed in*. They are much esteemed by the people, who take every opportunity of testifying it. On their entering the stage-box, the last time I saw them, the clappings and clamours were incessant for near a quarter of an hour, during which time, the Royal Family stood, and the King kept bowing in order to appease the tumult. As soon as the curtain was drawn, the actors and actresses appeared, and sung, "GOD SAVE THE KING;" in the chorus of which the whole assembly joined.

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The words "GOD SAVE THE KING," was painted in large gold letters, together with the King's arms, on a beautiful piece of suspended silk, which hung a little behind the singers on the stage. Though I was led to consider his Majesty as once acting in opposition to the liberties of my country, (and such considerations will intrude themselves,) yet still I felt as though he displayed the dignity of a monarch: And I readily imputed the rash conduct of BRITAIN towards AMERICA, to the conduct of evil ministers, and not to a gracious sovereign. The Queen and five Princesses exhibited a graceful appearance; and as I was so fortunate as to procure a seat pretty near them, you may well suppose I feasted my eyes abundantly. I saw them all once before—for you must know, that through the influence of a friend, I got a peep at ST. JAMES'S on the Queen's birth-day, and was lucky enough to obtain a seat in a room, through which they all passed in rotation, agreeably to their rank. This is the day which produces new fashions; and the nobility and gentry spend thousands in preparing for this annual festival. Every one makes it a point to appear in a new dress: Those of each sex, who cannot exceed their neighbours in elegance, will at least strive to do it in extravagance. Their footmen are complimented with new liveries, the costs of which would far exceed the belief of an *Ame-*

rican. There are many days in the year of a similarkind, which are beneficial to every class of tradesmen; and, indeed, if it was not for these, the rich would not spend their money, and the poor and industrious would perish for want of it. The PRINCE OF WALES is exceedingly large, but is well proportioned; complete master of the graces, and that etiquette, which is kept up in courts, and has so far discarded his juvenile extravagancies as to rise in the esteem of the nation. His royal brothers are equally respected; and all are in a situation to render some important services to their country. The PRINCE OF WALES has a crown in expectancy. The DUKE OF YORK commands a regiment of guards. The DUKE OF CLARENCE is a Rear-admiral of the fleet. PRINCE EDWARD, who is very young, has lately commanded a regiment at GIBRALTAR—but he and his regiment have now gone to QUEBEC. The King I once saw go in state to the House of Peers. He rode in his coach of state, drawn, by eight cream-coloured horses, and attended by a company of heavy dragoons, and a train of attendants.

I HAVE often heard people speak against the stage, as being the nursery of vice and immorality. It may promote vice and virtue too, and before we censure it, we ought to consider on which it has the most influence. Much may be
said

said both for and against the stage; but taking every circumstance into view, I think the arguments in its favor are not easily answered. It is not my intention to enter into an elaborate discussion of the subject, for my patience would be as much exhausted in writing as your's in reading a dissertation, where I could no more than repeat what has already been maintained, though perhaps the subject might be placed in a different light. But, I believe, a theatre depends upon its regulation: If that be bad, its effects are pernicious: If wise and prudent, it is a stimulus to every virtuous action. For our sense of virtue or vice rises or falls in proportion as our passions are regulated: Therefore, if the former be rightly represented, it will strongly engage the mind, and receive the approbation of the heart; if the latter be stripped of its gaudy covering, and its naked deformity prudently exposed, it will be abhorred even by those who practice it; and, I believe, the stage is the most proper place to expose the vices and follies of mankind, and to recommend the beauty and due observance of virtue. For here a concurrence of incidents, necessary to awaken the mind, are more fully united, and the more readily open the heart to receive, with a lively sense, every friendly admonition. Besides, the misfortunes of others, represented in tragedy, excite our compassion, and teach those feelings

which we ought daily to experience, when we see our fellow-creatures around us in distress. I have sat for hours, and feasted on my tears, and found them sweeter than the most delicious repast. If some of those who object could be once transported to DRURY-LANE, I believe they would return convinced of the fallacy of their arguments against such innocent diversions, and plead for the erection of a theatre in BOSTON. This, once accomplished, would reflect honor on its patrons, and cause a greater circulation of money among the poor and industrious.

WE ought to reverence the dictates of hoary age, though ever so severe. But we ought to reflect, that those who are tottering on the verge of life, and whose "heads are silvered o'er with age," can seldom relish any enjoyment, much less indulge their children in the follies of youth, though ever so necessary to their health and happiness. The rigid stoic considers the institution of plays, under what regulation soever they may be, as injurious to society, by promoting fashionable levity, idleness, and expensive dresses, (exclusive of other contingent charges,) by rendering the mind unfit for other and better pursuits, by the effect of some tragic scene, or weaning it from those necessary pursuits, by exposing the unsuspecting heart to soft desire,

desire, to those tender transports which swell the bosom, bewilder the senses, and persuade the innocent to launch into the boundless ocean of boisterous and precarious pleasure. If there is any danger, it arises more from the novel appearance of the actors and actresses, which is easily rectified—not from the institution; and, indeed, I am convinced, that were some of our *reformers* once introduced into one of the theatres, they would exclaim, “That mankind “ had filled up the measure of their iniquity.” In large and populous towns, there ought to be some public diversions, in order to relax the weary mind from its ordinary pursuits—to give vigor and health to the body, and an active flow of spirits.

ADD to all this—The theatre forms a school of education. As it is always frequented by people of the first distinction, so it may be expected, that the lower ranks would benefit by the good behavior and politeness of their superiors. The theme of education is echoed by the scholar, the statesman, and divine, which makes it almost folly to mention the subject, as it has been considered in every point of view the ingenuity of man could devise. We can only say, that it has an amazing influence on the human character, and lays a foundation for the improvement or misimprovement of a future life :

life ; that it enlarges the mind, and fortifies it against the force of temptation ; that it inspires the possessor with a keen sense of honor, and heightens the glow of friendship ; that it scatters the poisonous particles of hatred and ungovernable passion ; and buries the vile propensities of human nature in oblivion. The idea may still be extended, and enable us to conclude, that education has an equal influence on nations ; that in those countries where it has not been encouraged, the people are miserable devotees to blindness and error ; the few govern the many, and accelerate their destruction : That such countries feel the want of education in the commerce of the world ; for a civilized people will seldom confide in the engagements of barbarians ; and this may be exemplified in the savages of AMERICA, and the hardy race of *Norwegians*, on whom the light of knowledge never burst : That nations which are noted for their learning, are also noted for their liberality ; they feel their own importance in the scale of the universe, and force a due respect from their most inveterate enemies : that they discover useful inventions, and turn them to great advantage, both at home and abroad, and are solicitous for nothing more than a general diffusion of happiness among men. Were learning universal, nations would lay aside the instruments of death, and be content with the enjoyment of everlasting peace. They would no longer be seduced by
illusive

illusive wealth, or the principles of mad ambition. They would strengthen the bands of friendship, "and learn war no more."

As change the seasons, so change the taste and disposition of man. Formerly, people were delighted with tragedy, but now it appears to them insipid, and OTHELLO is almost forgotten. What may be called tragi-comedy now prevails. By tragi-comedy, I mean what is neither tragedy nor comedy, but something which partakes of both; something which exhibits a scene or two of the nature of tragic, and the rest rather ludicrous, calculated to swell the risibles, interspersed with a variety of love-songs, and other favorite music; so that you may well suppose the plot of a play is not the most ingenious part of it. Indeed the plays appear to have so little labor, that I once half resolved to grasp the pen, and try my skill; and, in fact, began to invoke the aid of the Muses for that purpose: but, recollecting that invocations have grown out of fashion, I relinquished my design, and turned my attention to a more important subject*.

As RANELAGH and VAUXHALL are places of great resort, and are decorated with the charms of the fair, and the harmony of song, I will mention them here. RANELAGH somewhat resembles a rotunda, and its sphericity is near

* The Political Crisis.

fifteen hundred feet. It is well provided with benches, and every necessary convenience. At one side, a beautiful orchestra is placed, which contains the music. When you enter, you generally pay half-a-crown; and coffee and tea, as often as you please to call for it, during the night, is included. Here you may see almost every degree of people from the highest nobleman down to the hair-dresser, all mingling together. The PRINCE OF WALES very frequently visits this place, and as often as he does, it appears the more brilliant. In fine, the intent of it is to promote an assemblage of every description; for variety is said to be charming—to spend a social hour, and to listen to the music—to behold the fire-works, or whatever else is exhibited—to take a peep at every thing which attracts the attention—to drink your coffee or tea, and then return home. But VAUXHALL exceeds description. It is composed of a large space of ground, well walled in, and filled with beautiful trees, which stand so thick as to form, over the head, an almost impenetrable bower. The lamps are so placed on the trees, as to form a variety of figures, calculated to please the fancy, and to promote conveniency. In the centre, is built an admirable orchestra, from which the music has a happy effect. This place of amusement is always provided with eatables, and almost every kind of liquor; but they are extremely dear; one cannot well sup under half-a-guinea,

a-guinea, and sometimes it costs a great deal more. VAUXHALL is seldom the whole of it lighted up. Part of it is called the Dark-walk. This part is unprovided with lights, and so extremely thick are the branches of the trees, which meet with one another about ten or twelve feet from the ground, that you cannot discover a person in it. In short, VAUXHALL is the noblest place of the kind in the universe. It is an elysium, and much resembles those delightful fields so often sung by the bards of antiquity.

LETTER

LETTER VIII.

SIR,

LONDON, June 14th, 1791.

THE crimes of WARREN HASTINGS, you have often heard of. The speeches of BURKE and SHERIDAN, against this unfortunate man, once made a deep impresson on your mind. The attention of Parliament has been turned again towards his situation. A motion was made in the House of Commons to resume the impeachment, which produced a warm and long debate. The opposition party contended, that all impeachments expired with the dissolution of Parliament; and as an intermediate dissolution had taken place, the prisoner was at liberty *to depart without delay*. Of this opinion was the learned Lord KENYON, Chief Justice of the Court of KING'S BENCH, who opposed the motion very strongly when it came to be debated before the Upper House. But the motion was finally carried, and WARREN HASTINGS was again compelled to appear at the bar. His sufferings have excited the pity of the people, who begin to think him not so criminal as was at first represented. No doubt the bitter invectives

tives of Mr. BURKE, have tended to multiply his crimes in the eye of the public; for a man's faults will never grow the less by being exposed to the prejudice of a too credulous age, and heightened by the pompous diction of an inveterate enemy. To this trial I attended several days. The high court before which the criminal was arraigned, is perhaps the most splendid in the universe. This trial is an intricate one—so intricate indeed, that I doubt whether all the judges (for some of the peers are very young) are capable of investigating its merits. Though Mr. HASTINGS is much worsted by the disagreeable predicament into which he is plunged, yet he appears like a man who is conscious of the rectitude of his conduct. His defence was much approbated, which he delivered in writing, while standing at the bar, and which took up the space of about three hours. He said he did not mean to plead necessity for what he did, but finally submitted to their Lordships' judgement, whether his conduct had not been such as to claim the gratitude of his country. He affirmed, that the country of HINDOOSTAN had flourished more under his administration than ever it had done before or since; and he thought it would appear, on taking every circumstance into consideration, that what he did was agreeably to justice, to policy, and to the laws by which his conduct was regulated,

I HAVE

I HAVE neither patience nor time to give you an epitome of this famous trial: It might be amusing, and instructing, and would teach one never to condemn a man unheard, nor to be too soon prejudiced against men in power, from the insinuations of those, who perhaps would be guilty of the grossest misrepresentation, in order to ruin their benefactor, that they might succeed him. Judgment is suspended. What it will be, is not easy to conjecture.

I HAVE attended the several courts of justice, and have heard many important causes tried, but I see nothing to recommend them above our own, except it be *their hasty decisions!* The gentlemen of the bar are so, so; and, what is very strange, they love MONEY!

THE *English* are an active people. No sooner was the preparations for a war with SPAIN laid aside, than the attention of Government was drawn towards the EMPRESS OF RUSSIA. That haughty Queen is so flushed with her late victory over the *Turks*, that she feels herself too important; and her rash conduct towards the *English* will only serve to humble her pride. She intimated to the *English* ambassador, that, if the King, his master, was not satisfied with her conduct, he was at liberty to retire from her court. This is rather looked upon as an insult. In consequence

quence of her aversion of peace—the Government has thought proper to prepare for a war. A large fleet is now ready to sail. A most dreadful impressing of men has been carried on for some time. The Stocks have greatly fallen. All *American* vessels may now find employment; and indeed many of them have engaged to sail to the MEDITERANEAN.

It may be asked, What advantage can it be to this country to enter into a war with RUSSIA? The answer given by the minister is, that a war is necessary in order to preserve a just balance of power; for should the *Russians* be able to usurp it, all EUROPE would be in danger, and therefore the principles of self-preservation, and the wisest policy dictate the measures now carrying on. Power is a favorite object with the Empress, and the prospect of being enslaved increases in proportion to her successes. The *Russians* wish to control the world; and their numbers are so great, and their spirit for war so vigorous, as to require a general combination to defeat their projects. Too much indulgence given to that capacious people, may prove destructive to the liberty of EUROPE. These are some of the leading principles on which this war is founded.—No advantages can possibly accrue to this country by it. The Empress has nothing to lose. Her country is fortified against every power in the world. Islands and fleets, she has none:
Neither

Neither does the cutting off her trade, with other nations, do her much damage. RUSSIA has resources within itself; and, in this particular, somewhat resembles AMERICA. Fleets may ravage the coasts along the Mediteranean; but that will neither conquer a warlike people, nor defray the expences of an armament.

BUT motives still more weighty hurry the *English* into an expensive war. They have contracted alliances; and, according to those contracts, are obliged to assist their allies, when attacked by unfriendly powers. The *Russians* have attacked the allies of the *English*, and these allies now demand the assistance of the *English* agreeably to treaty. This obligation must be fulfilled, or the faith of the nation sacrificed. To violate engagements is a great crime, more especially with nations; and to levy war upon a people without just provocation, is also a crime: From whence two questions naturally occur—Are we obliged to assist our allies when the war they have entered into be without our concurrence, though founded on equitable principles, and when they were the first aggressors? Or are we obliged to assist our allies, when the war they have commenced be manifestly unjust, though it comes within the spirit of the treaty? One answer will do for both these questions. It is clear that nations are bound to assist their allies, when those allies are unjustly attacked, and
never

never gave sufficient cause for such an attack. But when they unjustly provoke a nation to arms, and commence an unjust war, it seems they ought not to be assisted, notwithstanding the subsisting treaties: It is an imposition upon the goodness of the nation, to endeavour to draw the subjects of it into an expensive war, merely to satisfy the caprice or ambition of an ally, which makes a flourish of its power, because, when danger presses hard, it can claim the protection of those who have condescended to be its friends. When one nation agrees to do certain services for another, it is no doubt implied, that those services are founded in justice; otherwise it would be in the power of a nation to plunge another into great expences and disgrace, merely to gratify those who glory in disturbing the tranquillity of the world.

BUT whatever the faith of the treaties may dictate, I think that justice and prudence ought to have their due weight. Whoever considers the calamities on war, and the consequences flowing therefrom, must be convinced, that peace is preferable to the licentious tumult of arms. A war cannot be just, unless a sufficient provocation has been given, either by an open attack, or the violation of treaties, the observance of which is necessary to the safety and happiness of the contracting parties; or, as some hold, one nation may be justified in levying war upon another, whose

whose increasing power prognosticates the destruction of its neighbours. The present war with RUSSIA (unconnected with any subsisting treaty) I must consider as both unjust and imprudent on the part of the *English*: *Unjust*, because they have not received a sufficient provocation; for I hardly think an insult offered to an individual, although the representative of a great nation, can be any argument in favor of a precarious war, in which the lives of many valuable subjects must be sacrificed: *Imprudent*, because I think no advantage is to be gained by it, let it turn as it may; but, on the contrary, the expences must be severely felt, and tend to accumulate a debt, which is already the greatest evil that can afflict the nation.

AMONG the many impolitic schemes of government, I cannot help remarking on one; I mean the scheme of impressing men against their wills to enter into the army or navy. It must be some extraordinary necessity to justify such a proceeding; for nothing tends more to breed a disaffection, and to sow the seeds of discord between the ruler and the subject. To force a man to quit his suffering family is arbitrary. For him to resist is criminal. The parting tears of children and parents, are hostile to the feelings of those who trade in blood, and frown at the miseries of their fellow-creatures. I know it is often said, that private conveniency must give way to public necessity.

But we ought first to consider, whether the evils arising from such arbitrary measures, are not greater than those the public may suffer by a less rigorous procedure: If so the impressing of men is not warrantable, either by policy or law; the former is in some measure dictated by interest, which ought to be pursued by every government; but not to the great prejudice of others—the latter is founded in right; and that cannot be right which manifestly tends more to the injury of the subject than it does to the advantage of the public.

LETTER IX.

SIR,

LONDON, July 4th, 1791.

A TRAIN of reflections crowded upon my mind this morning when I awoke. The present condition of mankind excited me to an enquiry into the cause of so many wonderful changes in the systems of government, throughout the world, and the universal desire of substituting reason to the utter exclusion of ignorance and superstition. The first ages of the world were productive of wisdom and happiness. The middle ages were clouded, and mankind as miserable as war and famine could make them. At this time ROME began to decline, and finally become extinct. Soon the mists and fogs dissipated, and the benign rays of science began to break through the gloomy horizon, and irradiate the human understanding. The present period is a period of revolution: The despotic systems of the world, under which the people have groaned for many ages, are passing away; and those, calculated to protect us in the enjoyment of every legal right, seem to be rising to view on the mart of the old. States and empires

pires have their periods of prosperity, mutations, and decays; and happy, thrice happy, that nation, which can guard against the evils of luxury, and a too fatal security. After all, I drew this conclusion, that freedom will ever keep pace with knowledge; when the latter declines, the former verges to destruction.

BUT to the point.

I CAN readily figure to myself your present situation. Your ears are deafened with drums; and, at intervals, your senses are charmed with delicate music. Drums have a powerful effect in urging men to battle, and inspire each soldier with victory or death. The softer touches are calculated to sooth the turbulence of passion, and to fill the bosom even of the madman with serenity and friendship. Methinks I see the hall superbly decorated, and thousands partaking of a joyful repast, and the bottle merrily handed round in honor of the day. This day fifteen years since, gave birth to *American* independence. The sages of our country solemnly declared a separation from the parent State, and relied on the justice of their cause, and the smiles of Heaven, for protection. The arduous struggle was not in vain, though the lives of many brave heroes were sacrificed. Their memory will keep us in mind of the invaluable blessings we possess, and excite us to hand the fair inheritance down, sound and unimpaired, to latest posterity. The past exploits of our country are recorded in the

annals of Fame:—The reputation of COLUMBUS is fast increasing; and may she be directed to such measures as will promote her future welfare, and never tarnish the glory she has acquired in emancipating herself from the yoke of bondage; and long, very long, may she hold her present exalted rank among civilized nations!

THIS day, not only puts us in mind of our own struggle for liberty, but recalls to the memory the struggle of other nations. There is a sort of connection between the inhabitants of the globe, which nothing can break—a tender sympathy which nothing can expunge from the bosom. Great and good men do not belong to one State or nation, they are the citizens of the world; and when they are removed by death, the loss is universal. If EUROPE was clothed in mourning for the death of the venerable *American* FRANKLIN, why should not AMERICA mourn for the death of the celebrated MIRABEAU, and Dr. PRICE, the friends of mankind? The great MIRABEAU was cut off when he had just begun to shine as the SOLON or NUMA of FRANCE, in the midst of vigour and usefulness, when he had just begun to see the fruits of his labor increase, the happiness of his nation, and the rights of man respected. Dr. PRICE had labored long for the establishment of equal liberty, and he lived to see the influence of his sentiments over AMERICA, and even a great part of EUROPE.

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The abolition of the slave-trade was his last attempt; and he expired, the day previous to the determination of Parliament on that important subject, universally lamented. Perhaps no man in his day and generation has done more good to mankind than Dr. PRICE. He was open and liberal in his sentiments, in his friendship and love, he was sincere, an instructive and agreeable companion, a learned divine, an acute politician, an intuitive philosopher, and an universal scholar. Though he was treated very illiberally by Mr. BURKE, yet no man had fewer enemies. His virtues were so well known and acknowledged, that nothing can fully his memory. It shall live while every thing else shall be forgotten. Recorded honours shall gather round his tomb, and thicken over him. Posterity shall admire and profit by his works—fathers shall lead their little ones to his shrine, and say, “*There lies* THE APOSTLE OF LIBERTY!”

THUS much for the fourth of July—perhaps the fourteenth, the day on which the friends of the French Revolution meet to celebrate that auspicious event, may afford something worth communicating.

Yours, &c.

LETTER X.

SIR,

LONDON, July 15th, 1791:

YESTERDAY the second anniversary of the French Revolution was celebrated with high glee, at the CROWN & ANCHOR TAVERN, in the STRAND. There were about one thousand to partake of an elegant dinner, provided for the occasion: Among the rest was your humble servant. The company was respectable, and behaved with the greatest decency. A catalogue of toasts were previously prepared: Among them were the rights of man, the nation, the law and the king. They did not forget to notice our own country, when the sparks of freedom were first kindled. General WASHINGTON and the liberty of AMERICA, the memory of Dr. PRICE the apostle of liberty, of HAMPDEN, of MILTON, of SYDNEY, of LOCKE, and FRANKLIN, were drank in full bumpers, and went off with great and universal eclat. A *French* gentleman from NANCY wished to be permitted to read a few reflections to the company, and, being indulged, he addressed the assembly in an elegant speech, wherein he noticed the peculiar pleasure resulting to the

French

French from observing the attention paid to their affairs by the *English*; though they were citizens of different kingdoms, yet they were citizens of the world, and the lovers and promoters of peace and freedom, in whatever clime they were situated—even a band of brothers. This speech, though fraught with a little French flattery and compliment, was highly applauded. Mr. PAINE arrived in town the preceeding evening from PARIS, but he did not see fit to attend. It was once whispered that he had passed to the upper end of the room, with some gentlemen. This intimation produced a burst of applause, and it was a long time before the clapping and huzzas ceased to reverberate from the various parts of the hall.

AN excellent Ode was written by Mr. MERRY, part of which was set to music by STORACE, and sung by Mr. SEDGWICK, accompanied with the band, and a chorus of fingers. The ode was first recited to the company by a gentleman of the clerical order, and he did it with energy and satisfaction. I shall here recite the Ode for your perusal.

FRIENDS OF THE WORLD! this festive day,
Might sure demand a prouder lay,
Than ever bursting from the Theban's heart,
Taught o'er the Victor's lids the impassion'd tear to
start.

But, O! be sung the madd'ning train,
Who struggled on the Pythian plain,

And of immortal verse profuse,
 Hail'd the compulsive Lord of Syracuse;
 'Twas *his*, with eager hands to bind
 A myrtle wreath upon the fetter'd mind,
 And force degrading prejudice to please,
 But hence—far hence be themes like *these*,
 Tyrannic infants—fools of State,
 And such as ignorance deem'd THE GREAT,
 Have now their tinsel lustre lost:
 The feeblest bard of modern time,
 May higher swell his daring rhyme,
 A richer excellence may boast!
 With rapture point the PATRIOT BAND,
 Who sav'd a desolated land,
 Who made a fallen people *free*,
 And fix'd on Truth's broad base, the column *Liberty*.

HAVE kings and nobles *rights* alone?
 Is this prolific globe *their own*?
 And is this mingled mass beside,
 Form'd as the creature of *their* pride?
 Not so—the dire deception o'er,
 Mankind can now mankind adore;
 Nor bauble crowns, nor regal toys,
 Shall cheat them of their natural joys,
 Nor shall they more, by artifice subdu'd,
 Kiss the oppressor's rod, “A swinish multitude.”

* FILL high the animating glass,
 And let the electric ruby pass,
 From hand to hand, from soul to soul,
 Who shall the energy control,
 Exalted, pure, refin'd,
 The health of human-kind!

* These three stanzas were sung by Mr. SEDGWICK.
 The music by STORACE.

NOT now a venal tribe shall raise
 The song of prostituted praise,
 To sovereigns who have seiz'd their power;
 But at this gay, this liberal hour,
 We bless what heav'n design'd,
 The health of human-kind.

WE turn indignant from each cause,
 Of man's dismay, from partial laws,
 From kings who vainly seek by flight,
 To shun the blaze of moral light;
 We bless what heaven design'd,
 The health of human kind!

THE angel Freedom, from cœlestial wing,
 O'er ev'ry clime new bliss shall fling,
 Dissolve the mental frost that reigns
 On silent Lapland's dark domains;
 Cheer the black natives of the burning zone,
 And bid to ALL the rights of ALL be known:
 Till from his height each despot shall be hurl'd,
 AND REASON BEAR ALOFT THE FASCES OF THE
 WORLD,

HAVE not the *titled* sons of earth,
 Usurp'd prerogative of birth,
 As though appropriate to *descent*,
 Were high and noble sentiment?
 What sentiments can *noble* be,
 But those of truth and liberty?
 And what can dignity dispense,
 But justice and benevolence?
 And are not *these* the common share,
 Of all who breath this vital air?
 And has not kind, impartial Heav'n,
 To ev'ry rank an *equal* feeling given?
 Virtue alone should vice *subdue*,
 Nor are the many baser than the few.

HENCEFORTH

HENCEFORTH shall fair opinions rise
 To give to all their proper state,
 Due honors to the *good* and *wise*,
 And to the *vile* contempt and hate :
 By no hereditary plea,
 Shall proud conspicuous folly shine,
 The laws of truth shall make men FREE,
 And these are LAWS DIVINE.

THEN Britons think, that, *chains to bear*,
 Is but to linger in despair;
 Think on the blood your fathers shed,
 And venerate the mighty dead :
 Or should contending factions e'er presume,
 By smiles, or frowns, to fix your doom,
 Assert the hallow'd rights which Nature gave,
 And let your last, best vow be FREEDOM OR THE GRAVE.

THUS far the Ode. Some recent events in FRANCE, together with the spirit of reform, which begins to kindle in this country, had in some measure roused the attention of government, and the Aristocratic party, who persuaded several of the members not to attend. Lord STANHOPE, Mr. SHERIDAN, and Fox, were absent. It had been suggested that government had ordered some troops to lie in readiness in case of any outrageous acts of violence, and the press continually teemed with plots and rebellions, and endeavoured to impress upon the mind of the nation, that the meeting of the Constitutional Society, and that of any other gentlemen, who would wish to join it, to celebrate the revolution

revolution in FRANCE, was unconstitutional, and indicative of attempts to bring about a revolution in this country. To avoid giving cause of calumny and detraction, the society adjourned precisely at eight o'clock in the evening, and went to their respective homes. However, notwithstanding this precaution, a mob, consisting of the rabble, collected about twelve o'clock, and broke the windows of the CROWN and ANCHOR TAVERN, and some other houses,

It was suspected, that the mob would endeavour to liberate Lord GEORGE GORDON from his dungeon, and indeed vast numbers gathered round Newgate, but happily they had no leader to conduct them, else the consequences would have been more fatal. Before the dawn of day, they were all dispersed, probably for fear of the guards, who were put in motion, in order to protect the jail and bank from the fury of an infatuated mob,

BUT the consequences of this anniversary were much more dreadful in other parts of ENGLAND. Previous to it, at BIRMINGHAM, a hand-bill was circulated among the inhabitants, inviting all who were friends to the *French* Revolution to assemble at the Hotel on the 14th, in order to congratulate each other on the fall of despotism in a neighbouring kingdom, and to partake of a convivial repast. The company was numerous, but it soon dispersed upon the same principle

ciple as the one in London. The hand-bill is said to be the production of the celebrated Dr. PRIESTLEY, which I think is a mistake, for he is much noted for his prudence and foresight. In the evening, a large mob collected, and broke the windows of the Hotel. Fire was then set to the meeting houses of the Dissenters, and they were burnt to ashes. As if this was not enough, the deluded multitude attacked the dwelling house of Dr. PRIESTLEY, which is situated a little out of town: They soon laid it in ruins; and the Doctor's library and papers, and also his philosophical apparatus, and beautiful elaboratory, were piled up and burnt. Dr. PRIESTLEY, with great difficulty, escaped the fury of wretches, who were instigated by a desire of plunder, and a few hot-headed Aristocrats. Dr. PRIESTLEY is well known in the literary world, his exertions in the cause of civil and religious liberty have aided the establishment of the Rights of Man; his philosophical disquisitions are an honour to the nation, and to human nature; and it is to be lamented, that he has lost a large library, since he had many valuable manuscripts in it, some of which were ready for publication.

NEVER did BIRMINGHAM experience such a disaster. The citizens were panic struck, else they might have defended their property. The town contains upwards of eighty thousand inhabitants, and the number of the mob did not exceed five thousand. The damage is estimated at four hundred

hundred thousand pounds; perhaps is somewhat exaggerated, but it will amount to near that sum. No doubt the whole town would have been burnt, had not the arrival of the military prevented it. Confusion and dismay reigned among the inhabitants; insomuch that the dismal scenes, exhibited during several days, appear to have been premeditated. The High Church is rather in a tottering condition. Some of its advocates were industrious in propagating the principles of opposition among the colliers, and other predatory ruffians, in hopes of seeing the Dissenters loaded with the vengeance of an infatuated mob. Their plans succeeded but too well; and yet they have the impudence to tax the Dissenters as the cause of the misfortune. We know that such men as composed the rabble in question, are never influenced by principle. Plunder is their object, and it matters not from whom they take it. Many of the plunderers are apprehended, and no doubt they will suffer the punishments due to their temerity. About thirty were buried in the ruins of Dr. PRIESTLEY'S house. They were searching the cellar for liquors, when the roof fell in, and put a period to their existence.

BUT individuals will not suffer so much as one might, at first, suppose. They will have their losses made good by the county. In AMERICA, such laws do not operate. If they were to be adopted,

adopted, they would be productive of two good purposes. The first is, they would make the people more vigilant in repelling such dangerous attacks, when they know they must finally bear the loss. The second is, they would in some measure alleviate the distresses of those who might be so unfortunate as to have their property fall a prey to unrelenting violence. This law, I think, is founded in wisdom, and magnanimous policy; and how happy would the nation be, if all her laws were founded on as good a basis, and were as equitable in their operation! Disputes about religion have done more towards the depopulation of the earth than every calamity beside. But we experience a happiness, resulting from the anticipation of the period, when distinctions in religion shall be done away, and when the Churchman and Dissenter, forgetting their ancient animosities, will repair to the temple of Concord, and perpetuate the bands of social friendship.

Adieu! &c.

LETTER

L E T T E R XI.

S I R, LONDON, August 1st, 1791.

NO doubt most of the evils I mentioned in my former letter, result from the prostitution of the press. Any restrictions imposed upon the guardian of our liberty, have ever afforded a subject of declamation, and a theme of complaint. The press is justly stiled the Paladium of Freedom. It watches, like a faithful centinel, the encroachments of Arbitrary Power, and sounds the alarm of dangerous innovation. It brands with public odium, the enemies of the State, and makes monarchs tremble on their thrones. Through the medium of the press, the people have the result of public men, and of public measures, and rest secure under its protection. If the press was confined to the objects of its proper jurisdiction, no nation (which was possessed of this subtle vehicle) would be enslaved, no people would be rendered miserable by oppression. But notwithstanding these invaluable benefits arising from the freedom of the press, its licentiousness is in some countries sufficient

sufficient to balance them. In ENGLAND, perhaps the evils of a prostituted press, are greater than they are in any country whatever. Every public character is sifted, and if nothing notoriously criminal can be said, the virtuous are exposed to the cynical inuendos of every paragraph manufacturer, and what is still worse, to the detestable stings of the most barbarous insinuation, and the darkest suspicion.

BUT the injuries done to private characters, are diminutive when compared to those of a public nature. The science of government is freely investigated, and the bitterest censures are heaped upon one another without mercy. Almost every man has become a politician, and develops the principles of civil and political jurisprudence. The present period is a period of revolutions, and we have every thing to apprehend from the disposition the world now entertains of regenerating itself. The whole artillery of the religious and political literati is exerted, and the time approaches when it will burst upon the world with ten-fold rage. The press has become the vehicle of party spirit, and tends more to enflame them to moderate the passions of men. The late riots were influenced by the designing, through the medium of the press. If truth was adhered to, and the conclusions and the deductions of scribblers drawn within the compass of probability, the evils would not be

be so alarming. But when misrepresentation and sophistry are employed to rouse a spirit of infatuation among the low and vulgar, what have we not to apprehend! The scandalous and wilful lies propagated by a morning paper, concerning the proceedings of the society which met to celebrate the *French* Revolution in the town of BIRMINGHAM, has tended to mislead, and to create a detestation and abhorrence in the public mind, against a few innocent individuals. What punishment can be too severe for such infamous detractors! The malignity and diabolical vengeance, so artfully meditated by them, will recoil with double fury upon their own heads.

THE corruptions attending the elections of this country, cannot be too severely reprobated: For it is them, in a great measure, which has caused so much tumult, and threaten destruction to the present constitution. That the government, in many instances, is corrupt, no one can deny; indeed the occurrences of the day will warrant the assertion. An instance of it lately exhibited to the view of a court of justice, and to the world, is enough to stagger all belief. But such is the wanton depravity of the human mind, that a minister was capable of being prostituted, by openly interesting himself in the elections, expending the public money in the support of them, *merely to help a friend!* This has been manifested to his eternal disgrace and shame; and

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it at once convinces every rational mind of the little confidence to be placed in the servants of the public. When ministers become venal, the State has every thing to apprehend; when they stoop to practice the lowest artifice and chicanery, too low for the most abandoned profligate, wretched must be those they govern! Duped and cajoled till they are worn out by oppression, the people will demand justice of their oppressors in a tone too bold to be denied!

THE present minister has ever declared that the national debt is yearly decreasing. How great the deception! Whoever will examine the income and expenditure of the public monies for the last seven years, will find that the former falls far short of the latter. This is an alarming symptom, and forebodes some dreadful national calamity. I am ready to pronounce, that, if the present ministers proceed as they have done, and the public burdens continue to increase, they will one day experience some awful popular indignation; and the MAJESTY OF THE PEOPLE prove too powerful for those who think themselves secure, while they are suffered to approach the shadow of a sceptre!

LETTER XII.

SIR,

LONDON, Aug. 10, 1791.

NO doubt you have heard of the flight of the King and Royal Family of FRANCE—their arrestation, and the subsequent proceedings of the National Assembly relative to that event. Perhaps you may wish to know the cause of a revolution, which, if carried into effect, could not fail of afflicting the nation with fresh calamities. I will endeavor to trace it as concisely as language will admit of.

BUT as we proceed, it is necessary to bear in mind, that the monarchy of FRANCE, posterior to the late Revolution, was *absolute*, consequently the prerogatives of the monarch had no limitation. Every department of government was of a similar texture; and the tribunals, whether inferior or superior, were only the engines of despotism. The nation, after enduring the worst of tyranny for many ages, conceived an opinion, that experiments in government were not unlike experiments in philosophy or geometry, and resolved to regenerate itself, or perish in the at-

tempt. This total regeneration produced a new order of things; and you may well suppose, that those who held offices of profit under the old system, were hostile to the new one, which precluded them from any share in the public administration, the offices being wholly abolished, or bestowed on those who were friends to the general welfare. Thus deprived of the means of support, the excluded officers and magistrates were led to oppose every innovation; and, from their numbers, the nation had something serious to apprehend, till it found, by experience, that the hearts of almost every member of the empire beat in unison. Perhaps the National Assembly, in endeavouring to extricate the people from the worst of servitude, has proceeded too precipitate. The King was deprived of his prerogatives one by one, till he could not even boast the shadow of authority. He was deprived of those, which, if he had been so disposed, he could not exert to the injury of the subject. The fact is, the *French* begin to consider a king as a useless piece of gorgeous furniture—an incumbrance to the State. They see other nations reposing themselves in the arms of peace—their commerce extending—their credit and riches increasing, and yet are unable to boast a crowned head. Besides, the expences of royalty are not very inconsiderable; the burden is sensibly felt, and

and men seem to have a disposition to shake it off.

IN proceeding, however, the National Assembly ought to have recollected, that the regeneration of governments is attended with many unforeseen difficulties; the completion of such a work is not so easy as some may imagine. The politicians of FRANCE foresaw, unless they were exceedingly short-sighted, that a combination among the princes of EUROPE to liberate the *French* monarch, was at least politic, and even come within the limits of probability. They ought to have provided against this; and perhaps the best provision would have been, to have left the King in the quiet possession of those prerogatives which had no dangerous tendency, and which might have prevented the rapid decline of the royal dignity. But the National Assembly, trusting to the power of the nation, and to the rectitude of its intentions, levelled all distinctions at once; which, if this levelling principle had been suffered to operate gradually, might have been productive of quite different effects; and in a short time, place the nation in the wished-for condition—free from those tumults and disorders, which now agitate the empire, and arm the citizens against each other.

THUS being deprived of the power, so dear to sovereigns, and being instigated by the Queen, and some of his adherents, who were dismantled of their splendid titles, and reduced to a level with the rest of mankind, the King and royal family of FRANCE, on the morning of the 21st of June, endeavoured to escape the kingdom! their plan was well concerted, though not so happily executed. You must know, that, since the *French* Revolution, no gentleman can leave FRANCE without a passport. The plan of the royal escape was thus contrived. Some of the *French* refugees at MENTZ (and it is generally attributed to M. DE CALONNE, the late minister of State), let a foreign Gentleman into the secret, who resided at PARIS. This Gentleman applied to the *Russian* Ambassador for a passport for himself and family, as they were bound out of the kingdom. It was granted; but in a few days, application was made for another, and the reason given was, that in destroying some unnecessary papers, the passport was accidentally destroyed with them. Of course a new passport was granted, and both countersigned by M. MONTMORIN, the present minister. Thus being possessed of two passports, the Gentleman who applied for them was able to furnish the royal fugitives with one; and they all went off near together. The King and royal family, after bribing two or three centinels, and causing a
false

false alarm, in order to divert the attention of the guards to another quarter, went out of the palace of the THUILLERIES in the night, one by one, and at some distance of time from each other ; dressed in disguise, and fled in a coach and six towards MENTZ, which is in the Emperor's dominions. The King left behind him a long manifesto, explaining his motives and principles ; but as it is so long, I cannot even give you an epitome of it. Suffice it to say, That he bitterly reproached the National Assembly for keeping him a prisoner in his own State—for neglecting to furnish him with the common conveniences of life—for obliging him to sanction laws, of which he disapproved ; and concluded, by declaring, that the proceedings of the National Assembly had been uniformly against his opinion, and that he was obliged to secure his personal safety, and that of his family, by quitting the capital. That the National Assembly were influenced in their deliberations by the factious. This manifesto was, doubtless, intended to influence the compassion of the nation, and to win as many of the inhabitants as possibly could be to his interest.

THE *Parisians*, at the news of this event, did not abandon themselves to riot, as was apprehended they would, but remained quiet, without making the least movement, except to ap-

pear at the bar of the National Assembly, to repeat the civic oath, and to pledge themselves to defend their country against the meditated invasion, at the hazard of their lives. The deliberations of the National Assembly were firm, such as well became them at that critical moment. An answer to the King's manifesto was immediately dispersed, and measures taken to excite peace and confidence, and to put the nation in a state of defence: No difficulty occurred in augmenting the national guards to two hundred thousand men!—In this answer, the National Assembly observe, that in the Revolution of States, no one is exempt from some inconvenience, and it is not strange, if the pleasures of the Royal Family met with a momentary interruption: That their proceedings have been influenced by the factious; yes, say they, by twenty-six millions of the factious!

BUT amid these deliberations, news arrived at PARIS of the capture of the royal fugitives. They had proceeded as far as MENEHOULD, in CHAMPAGNE, where the post-master recognized them; and, without manifesting the least suspicion, took horse and reached VARENNES before them, and gave intelligence to the municipality of the discovery he had made. VARENNES is near the frontiers of FRANCE, only ten posts from MENTZ. Here they were apprehended by a
citizen,

citizen, and two soldiers of the national guard, who, for their bravery, had a civic crown decreed them by the National Assembly. From hence, the royal fugitives were conducted back to PARIS by a guard of thirty thousand men, not a little chagrined at the misfortunes they had met with. A large body of troops arrived at VERENNES, from MENTZ, just before the King and royal family reached that place, in order to protect their escape; but they were no sooner commanded to liberate their sovereign, than they grounded their arms, and declared themselves for the nation. It is said, that the King might have got away, had he not so often stopped to gratify his appetite. He is much noted for his intemperance; and on his return to PARIS, he was so much intoxicated, as to manifest his shame to the crowded populace. This, in some measure, obscures those good qualities, of which, it is said, he is possessed. But we ought not to judge with too much severity. Perhaps the keenness of his appetite was excited by affliction; and the impression which the degradation of the royal dignity made upon his mind only erased by the fumes of wine. I think the situation in which he was placed ought to be admitted as an ample apology for his intemperate excesses.

THE nation thus circumstanced, it was thought that the throne would have been declared vacant, and a regency appointed to exercise the functions of a king during the minority of the Dauphin; for the King, by his manifesto, had abdicated the crown as much as ever JAMES the SECOND did; and, considering the temper of the nation, lenity was not to be apprehended. Commissioners were appointed to take the declarations of the King and Queen, relative to their departure. By these, it appears, they had no intention of leaving the kingdom; they were only repairing to a fortified place near the frontiers. But their intentions were so evident, that their declarations cannot be credited. On this point, the National Assembly has not been precipitate. It has finally decreed, that the person of the King is inviolable, and, of course, he cannot be brought to trial for the intended escape; a decree much more temperate than the most impartial observer had reason to expect, much more temperate than the Jacobin Clubs in PARIS wished for. It has even excited a mob, who are inveterate against the name of KING, the suppression of which has cost some few lives.

IN fine — The *French* seem to be in an unsettled state. It is hoped they will soon establish

a permanent government, and the inhabitants experience the blessings of it. Two hundred and ninety out of above eleven hundred members of the National Assembly, have protested against the proceedings of that body. This few seem to be in favor of the King, and wish to have a restoration of his dangerous perogatives. A new assembly will meet in a short time. What the disposition of it will be, is beyond conjecture.

LETTER

LETTER XIII.

S I R,

LONDON, August 20, 1791.

IT is often said of the learned, that they are never known till after they are dead. This may readily account for the very few distinguished characters of the present age. I do not mean to insinuate, that ENGLAND is destitute of learned men; no doubt it contains as many, or more of that description, than any nation in EUROPE: But I cannot think it shines with that lustre in literature, which it did in the beginning of the present century. Indeed the period wherein the most celebrated *English* writers flourished, such as DRYDEN, SWIFT, POPE, ADDISON, &c. may be termed the *Augustan* age; and their death seemed to extinguish a fire, which began to kindle, and to light up the torch of reason among mankind. But though the period I have mentioned was noted for periodical publications; yet the present may be said to exceed it in the researches of Philosophy. Dr. PRIESTLEY is, perhaps, the greatest Philosopher to be found in any age or nation; and had not his valuable manuscripts
been

been destroyed by the fury of a licentious mob, the sciences would have rejoiced in a son so propitious to their glory. Philosophy, however, is not confined to this narrow island. In AMERICA, the celebrated FRANKLIN first traced out the principles of electricity. He scaled the heavens, and turned aside the fiercest lightning*. The character which has been given him by the learned, is, no doubt, well applied:

Eripuit Cælo fulmen, Septrumque Tyrannis!

The *French* nation has paid a proper respect to his memory. Future ages shall profit by his labors, and do justice to his merits. Philosophy, however, was not his only study. He lived at a period when his country was in danger—when his liberties were attacked—and when her sons beheld the shackles of bondage preparing for them. He felt the principles of patriotism glow in his ardent breast. He resigned the tranquil sweets of repose, for the stormy scenes of the cabinet; which he never quitted till his country was in safety, and her liberties secured. Crowned with unfading laurels, he returned from his embassy, and again entered the pleasing walks of philosophy, in which he continued till his death.

† Alluding to his steel rod, or conductor.

SINCE

SINCE the days of POPE, perhaps no satyr^{ist} has been more poignant, than Peter PINDAR, Esq. This is a fictitious name. His real name is Wolcott, a physician, living at Exeter. It is said that he was once a clergyman, and had a living given him in the WEST INDIES; but his conduct was such as soon deprived him of the patronage of his friends. He is undoubtedly a great wit, not much inferior to his predecessor of the same name; who inspired his countrymen, the *Thebans*, with courage to defend their liberties. The aims of the one were directed to something noble; the other, to every thing ignoble and mean. The wit of the modern PINDAR is of the malicious kind, and he makes no distinction between vice and virtue. He indulges his most bitter asperity on the King, whose moral and religious character is unfullied; and this he does, as he himself acknowledges, because it creates a market for his works. The King is known to be very strict in his duties as a Christian; which forms a character, seldom to be found among monarchs. However, the works of PINDAR may be read with pleasure; though at the same time one cannot help cursing the wretch, who would willingly plant a dagger in the bosom of the innocent. On reading some of his works, I wrote the subsequent ode, with which I have ventured to close this letter:

WHILE

WHILE gaping crowds admiring stand,
And tyrant men usurp command,
I act some humbler part—
Content to fight in Virtue's cause,
To advocate decorum's laws,
And strive to mend the heart.

THE kind and wise employments hard,
To wake a world to hear a bard,
Whose slanders never wound;
Since odes *Pindaric* rule the times,
Since good men's virtues pass for crimes,
And falsehood spreads around.

PINDAR's reproachful rage inspires
Contempt in sons and rev'rend fires,
Whose characters are dear:
'Tis his to carp at splendid worth;
To pass unheeded by the truth;
And bilge the briny tear.

THE peasant disregards his stings,
Since he's compell'd to share with kings,
The pills of bitter spite;
Tho' merit feels the vengeful dart,
Which flies at ev'ry noble heart,
Yet laws shall not indite.

LET conscious guilt afflict his breast,
And omens pale disturb his rest,
'Till death shall prove his end:
Let seasons murmur as they roll,
The secret purpose of his soul,
And shame his life attend.

'TIS PINDAR's part to act the clown,
To raise his name to bright renown,
By filth, and mud, and dirt:

Injustice

Injustice guides his lubric pen
To stigmatize the best of men,
With gall's invenom'd spirt.

A son of wickedness and lust !
The Quack has levell'd with the dust,
The stubborn limbs of health :
His *potions* crowded to the grave,
The master first, and then the slave,
Because he courted wealth.

IMPRUDENCE made him once so poor,
That justice turn'd him out of door,
And then to FRANCE he fled *—
There plan'd the scheme to stab by rule,
Became a member of the school,
Which foul detraction bred.

RETURN'D again to ALBION's shore,
He soon began to practice more
Of slander's lessons *black*—
Now wrapt in thought profound, he *dips*
His pen in gall, to season *whips*,
To lash severe *his* back.

BUT shame, the consequence of guilt,
Shall mutilate the name he's built,
On honour's threaten'd fall ;
Whilst trembling o'er the yawning grave,
He'll then the world's forgiveness crave,
And bow at PLUTO's call.

* He once owed so much, as to leave his country in order to avoid the prison.

LETTER XIV.

SIR,

LONDON, September 1st, 1791.

AT a time like this, when such mighty changes are taking place in the affairs of the world, you must not expect that I shall entertain you with even an epitome of the various curiosities to be met with, or expatiate on the manners and customs of the *English*—their predilection for many things to which an *American* is indifferent—and that nice discrimination of the human character, for which they are so much celebrated. Politics are a theme on which I like to dwell; and you must excuse me, if I now and then put your patience to the test. I am now in a country which is already agitated with internal commotion, and liberty courted as the friend of man. The mind is awakened with interesting objects; and the scene which two glorious revolutions have opened upon the world, will tend to regenerate it, and banish servitude from among men.

REFORMATION in the governments of nations is rapidly progressing: Indeed it has already
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taken place in many parts of the globe. Tyrants strive in vain to stop the blaze of moral light, and to maintain their ancient prerogatives. The inhabitants of the world have long dwelt in darkness, and groaned beneath the weight of arbitrary power. But they are not always to be slaves. The sun of knowledge, which has been so long obscured by ignorance and superstition, begins to throw its beams through the gloomy horizon, and to irradiate the human understanding. It scatters light into man, and raises him from the degrading sphere in which he has so long wandered. It inspires him with a consciousness of the dignity of his nature, and bursts the hateful bandage from his eyes.

THE progress of knowledge is discovered by arbitrary governments, and they tremble at their impending fate. Though they have raised every barrier against it, which their wit and ingenuity could devise; yet the counteracting influence of public virtue will surmount every difficulty, and finally accomplish the political salvation of mankind. Heaven will one day be glorified in the protection of its children, and deliver them from the oppressors of the earth.

It seems rather strange, that governments will still persist in exercising their wanton cruelty over their subjects, when they see themselves
verging

verging to a decline, and new governments continually arising, founded on the rights of man, throughout the world. But such is the vain conceit of some—such the blindness of others—that it seems as though the Almighty had rendered them insensible of the end to which they are fast hastening, on purpose to destroy them for the calamities and miseries they had inflicted on others. Be this as it may; we are authorized in drawing the conclusion, from the strange infatuation of those who once acquired a name by spreading havoc and destruction among men—but who are now detested for a deceitful and barbarous ambition.

WE are filled with horror at the view of the blood which has been spilt between contending nations. Mankind have traced out the cause of it, and are ashamed to find that they should have been so long mistaken in their principles. They turn with disgust from war and tumult, and court the smiling arts of peace. These are lovely objects of contemplation, and inspire the bosom with sentiments of humanity and compassion. They dissipate the ferocity and barbarism of our natures, and exalt us above the mean prejudices of nations; which have hitherto drenched the world in blood.

THE arbitrary impositions, under which the people of this country labour, raise a moment-

ary indignation in my breast. I readily exult in being a citizen of a free country, where our rights are secured by existing laws, founded on impartial justice. The evils of which we complain, will not admit of a radical cure, unless the Government itself will seriously incline to favour it: For many of these evils arise from the connection of Church and State—and the exorbitant demands for money to support those who are not deserving of the gratuity of their country—such as friends and favourites—the engines of despotism; because, for a small stipend, they exert their influence to keep their benefactors in power; and so the old maxim is strictly adhered to,—*one good turn deserves another*—more especially when mutual advantages accrue from the dangerous combination. Thus every art is made use of to keep the present ministers and members in power; and to support and continue the numerous demands on the public treasury.

THE comparison between the Parliament of GREAT-BRITAIN and the Congress of AMERICA, is so striking, that, were I adequate to the task of delineating it, the line of distinction between those two bodies might be of advantage. Suffice it to say, that the Parliament is not composed, as it ought to be, of men who are matured by age, and grown grey in experience, and who are the best qualified to judge of the local, much more of the complicated concerns of the
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nation: It is principally composed of the wealthy, most of whom are yet beardless youths—chosen by cities and boroughs from any part of the nation; so that those who have wealth sufficient to corrupt the *electors*, are almost sure of an *election*. The method of representation is so constructed, as to exclude many towns of large extent from the privilege of voting; while some very small ones are so privileged, as to send several members to Parliament. This point I have dwelt on elsewhere; which precludes the necessity of expatiating so largely upon it in this place, as it otherwise might require: Suffice it to add, that this inequality of representation is the source of many alarming difficulties—such as may, if not timely remedied, prove destructive to the present government and constitution. But the *American* Congress is composed of men, chosen equally by the people: They are generally those who have deserved well of their country, by stepping forward in the hour of danger, and protecting her invaded rights; who have endured the stormy scenes of the cabinet, and the unwelcome toils of the field, when war, like a low-hung cloud, threatened destruction in their borders. Their money has never influenced their election. The people have thought and acted for themselves; and though a contest sometimes happens, no instance has yet occurred, where the electors were corrupted—where even

an attempt was made to do it; for such a measure would be the only means to excite the detestation and abhorrence of the people.

THE influence of ministers has provoked the world long enough. Though tyrants have hitherto evaded the punishment due to their crimes, yet a reckoning day is at hand: Justice will not always slumber, nor the people be prevented from seizing the reins of government, and from exercising them to the advantage of the community at large. The time will come, when the popular indignation of mankind will hurl tyrants from their thrones, and despotism be laid in ashes. Of that period let political hypocrites *beware!*

THERE ought to be some limitation to the power of ministers; it ought to be prescribed within the bounds of policy. Those who delegate this power, ought to reflect on the precariousness of human prudence, and the arbitrary principles of men. Too much power is dangerous in the hands of an individual. When there are several connected in the dispensation of authority, they serve as mutual checks on each other. Though some men, if their conduct could be screened from the world, would appropriate the public finances to useless purposes, and accumulate great fortunes at the expence of others; yet the fear of detection would guide them in
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the paths of justice, when there was a possibility that their crimes would be arraigned before the world. Hence the danger of trusting an individual with the purse of the nation: Hence too, the danger of suffering him to charge the public with what sums he pleases for secret services, when no law can oblige him to signify the purposes for which they are expended!

THE conduct of Mr. PITT (and he is not singular) affords a memorable proof in support of what I have advanced. When he first became Secretary of State, the nation was much prejudiced in his favour, from the disposition he early discovered of following the steps of his illustrious father. But, instead of exposing to public hatred, the ministers and sons of corruption; he became an accomplice in their wickedness, and shared their villany. The curious circumstances attending a late trial, will warrant the assertion. When ministers so far descend from their office, as to interest themselves in the elections, the public has much to apprehend—but much more to apprehend, when they employ the wealth of the nation, so far to corrupt the elections, as to get their own friends and favourites into office—some of whom are despised by the people, and their administration attended with distrust and apprehension. The late contested election in the city of WESTMINSTER, betwixt Lord HOOD and Mr. FOX, was strongly

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supported, on the part of the noble Lord, by Mr. PITT. His secretary engaged a man, whose name is SMITH, to procure votes; and in the prosecution of the business he expended large sums of money. After Lord HOOD had failed in his election, SMITH brought his action against Mr. PITT's secretary, for the money he had laid out and expended, at his instance and request, in the late election. When the action came on to be heard, it plainly appeared by the testimony adduced, that Mr. PITT engaged to pay the money; or, rather, was consenting to the bargain made between his secretary and SMITH. The court declared that the defendant ought to have been better advised, than to have suffered such a cause to come into view; for it was the most scandalous proceeding that ever disgraced a court of justice. The defendant's counsel endeavoured to apologize for *his* conduct, by asserting, that he had been wrongly instructed, or he should not have advised it.

WHAT business has a minister of State to interfere in the elections? What infamy and disgrace would our secretary, JEFFERSON, incur, were he so far to derogate from his high station, as to wink at a bribe, or presume to insult the good sense of his countrymen by acts of injustice and corruption! I leave the world to judge, whether the conduct of Mr. PITT is not influenced by a sinister ambition, rather than the
public

public good. It manifests the disposition of the man, and the dangerous malady of the heart; which may one day break forth to the ruin of the nation, and draw the vengeance of the people on the aggressor—who must inevitably fall with the falling State.

SINCE Mr. PITT has been in office, it has ever been his boast, that the national debt has been decreasing; and he has found means to make some few believe it. The increase of duties and taxes naturally warrants this conclusion; and the people are willing to put as favourable a construction upon the exertions of the minister, as a jealous scrutiny will allow. But if the minister is to be justified in squandering the public money, in promoting the spirit of party, in suppressing the exertions of the weak and timorous, in favouring the aspiring and lawless, the burdens of the State, instead of lessening, will multiply apace, and finally bear down all before them. When the people are convinced that their treasure is applied to beneficial purposes, they will seldom complain of the measures employed to obtain it: But when all the necessities and conveniences of life are exorbitantly taxed, and when even the light of heaven is not free, without paying for it in proportion as we receive it; and when, too, the vast sums arising from this exorbitancy, are applied to useless purposes—the grounds of complaint
are

are greatly multiplied: In the language of the poet,

Ev'n the sun's ray, and the sweet air of heav'n,
Touch'd by the Midas finger of the State,
Is turn'd to gold, for PITT to sport away.

WHEN once corruption and venality find their way into the State, and are patronized by the ministers of justice, the laws lose their binding force, and become a mere nullity. In looking over the code of this kingdom, I find that the legislature has been very intent in times past to regulate the elections, and to prevent an undue influence and corruption. Statutes have been made in various reigns for this purpose; some incapacitating men from holding any office, civil or military, who had promoted fraud, and endeavoured to influence the elections by undue means; others inflicting heavy penalties, particularly on those who held offices, and who were the most likely to endanger the freedom of elections. But the statute of the 7 W. & M. cap. 4. is more directly adapted to my purpose, as it was made to remedy the evils exercised by the present minister of State, in the plenitude of his power. This statute enacts, that if any man, chosen as a member of Parliament, who shall directly or indirectly give any money, or make any entertainment, or promise any place or preferment, promise, or
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make any agreement, or by any means whatever influence his election; such member or members, so offending, shall be disabled and incapacitated, upon such election, to serve in Parliament. The penalties inflicted for the breaches of this act are such, if put in execution, as would purge away the detestable practice of the buying of votes, by granting rewards and entertainments; which is daily carrying on with impunity.

IF this law were rigorously executed, no member would dare to take his seat in the House of Commons, unless he was freely elected by the people, when no promises of rewards, provision or entertainment, were distributed to influence the minds of the electors. And here suffer me to ask—Is there scarcely a member of the House of Commons, who takes his seat in that august assembly by the unbiassed voice of his constituents? It is notorious, that many of them keep open houses of entertainment, for a considerable time before the day appointed for the closing of the poll, in order to purchase votes of the multitude; and it is rare, if the candidates spend less than ten thousand pounds on such occasions. Candidates are not the only busy persons—their friends and advocates are everywhere employed; even an amiable Dutchess, not long since, was seen riding through the streets, and dealing out money with a liberal hand

hand to the mob, and craving votes for one of her favourites. The laws are not lame—sufficient ones exist to correct these abuses—but they are in some measure obsoleted by the opposing power of men in office, who obtain their places by violating the fundamental principles on which they pretend to rest and are supported. This is a solecism in politics, and might be corrected, if some spirited republican *in power* were once to set himself about it; or the courts of justice to recognize the crime of manifest corruption, by the universal complaints of a wise and great people. The awakening influence of the rights of man, and the daring attacks on the liberty of the subject, begin to wound the feelings of men in power, who already tremble for the approaching fate of despotism—and the period when they will be ousted of their office, and public honours conferred on those who are deserving well of their country.

THIS plainly shews, that the *English* Government is not in practice, what it appears to be in theory. Instead of having old experienced men for legislators, young foplings grace the seats of power—where age and experience once reared their crest, and awed the world. How different from the members of the *American* Congress! whose heads are silvered o'er with age, and wisdom and integrity guide their deliberations.

berations. The observation once made by a great ambassador to his sovereign, on his return from his embassy, may be well applied to the *American Congress*—*That ROME was a temple, and her senate an assembly of Kings.*

THE people of this country have the most to dread from those who are under the immediate influence of the crown; and yet such characters find means to acquire places of power, and to support the principles of the aristocratic junto in the House of Commons. It is well known, that a great proportion of the members of that body are pensioners under the crown—and not a few (to prevent too great suspicions) who receive pensions under fictitious names, such as Mr. BURKE, and some other leading characters; and though they strive to keep it secret, yet the story is propagated, and receives credit, as it has never been denied by those who are the most concerned. It is conjectured that Mr. BURKE has bartered all those great and noble principles, for which he so long and ardently contended, for the mere acquisition of a pension—and sullied the glory of his past life, by basely stooping to a bribe. Here, again, the law might interpose, but it is evaded with impunity, and of no more influence than a mock-tragedy. The statute of the 1 Geo. 1. cap. 56. declares and enacts, that no man, having a pension for any time or number of years, in
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his own name, or in the name or names of any other person or persons, in trust for him, or for his benefit, shall be capable of being elected or chosen a member of the House of Commons; and that if any such pensioner shall presume to sit or vote in the House of Commons, then, and in such case, he shall forfeit *twenty pounds* for every day in which he shall sit or vote.

If the feelings of men were not fortified against the impressions of duty on the one hand, and of a keen sense of honour on the other, the penalties in the law might make them tremble. But, so it is, some men are above the law; and instead of their being made to stoop to the law, they make the law stoop to them, and render it subservient to their schemes of ambition, and a cloak to all their villany in the management of the concerns of the State. If they are complained of, and attacked as the violators of the law, they make use of every sorry shift and cunning art, in order to evade the execution of offended justice; and they but too often succeed in their attempts of escape.

DISTINCTIONS in monarchy are said to be the great bulwark of the public safety. How such distinctions can promote safety, we *Americans* are yet to learn—but may the fatal period of that learning be as remote as possible! There is always danger, when any one branch of
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Government considers itself as not acting for the people, but merely for itself. In such Governments, contention is always awakened, and jealousy continually kept alive in the very bowels of the constitution. It is a maxim of the common law, that Peers of the realm do not act for the interest of the people, but for their *own* interest; which is known to be in a great measure separate from that of the community at large; and this gives them the right of voting by proxy—a right derived from the feudal institution, which allowed the barons to fight by proxy in the wars of those times. Those who have no interest in the immediate concerns of the farmer, trader, and mechanic, and whose estates are out of the reach of the law, which might greatly affect the estates of the lower classes of the people, often prove dangerous to their country. I wish that every class might be represented in proportion to its interest and importance in society. The House of Lords can, and often do, negative the doings of the other House, when these doings merely concern the laborious part of the community—and which no ways affect the property of the Nobility. Some reform is necessary, in order to render all the departments of Government more subservient to the public good; and since such a reform is practicable, we are the less culpable in endeavouring to promote it. We behold other nations breaking the fetters of slavery, and equalizing
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their citizens, and that too without the least difficulty; and can the most prejudiced suppose, that a reformation in the *English* Government would be attended with hazard and a profusion of blood? Let them learn wisdom from the example of those States, who have nobly dared to frown on the badge of servitude, and to repose themselves in the sun-shine of freedom. When that blest period shall arrive, the interest of *one* will be the interest of *all*, and *all* the interest of *one*; so that acting by proxy will be exploded, and the House of Lords moulded into something different from what it now is. The members of the House of Commons are excluded from the privilege of voting by proxy, by that good maxim of the law, *Delegata potestas non potest delegari*.

IF it be true, that the Nobility of the realm hold it as a maxim, to regard only their own interest, why should there be any connection between them and the Commons? Let each body legislate for itself, and it would not be long before the gorgon tribe would be glad to relinquish the arbitrary assumption of power, with which they rule the world, and cement a lasting union with plebeian policy, for the preservation and protection of their lives and fortunes. The Commons may live independent of *them*—but they cannot subsist independent of the Commons: The obligation and wants be-

tween them are not reciprocal; more especially since the immense descendable estates of the nobility were acquired by force from the industrious part of the community, and made perpetual in order to form a shield of defence against the attacks of the injured. What obligation do I owe to a man who robs me of my property, and subjects me to slavery? The institution of which I complain, is not the less harmless for having its origin in a remote period, since the basis of it is the same; and time, instead of mitigating the circumstances of its first acquisition, rather tends to increase their malignity: Wrong, in its origin, can never be legitimated by prescription.

If the voice of history could be heard, it would inform us, that monarchy has ever been a source of calamity to mankind. Even the reign of the first *Jewish* King, though by the express desire of the people, was attended with perpetual disorder, rebellion, and feuds, with which the nation was before unacquainted, while it formed a democracy—all arising from monarchical Government. The Almighty upbraided them for asking of him a King: Nevertheless he indulged them, that he might convince them of their folly, and display his mighty power in generating the many revolutions among them. In some countries, the affairs of Government have been conducted by two joint monarchs.

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This was the case in SPARTA and ROME; but they only served to multiply wickedness and blood; though we are told that those under the HERACLIDÆ, two princes of the blood, who reigned in SPARTA, maintained their power in their line for upwards of seven hundred years. Indeed the Government of most of the States of GREECE was often usurped by tyrants, and nothing but the vengeance of an enraged people could extirpate it. At other periods, when wearied with human butchery, we behold them laying aside party views, and consulting the general safety. For this purpose the Amphictyonic league was formed; and as long as it continued, except some few casual interruptions, GREECE was the theatre, on which Peace and Happiness embraced her sons, till at last its schemes were thwarted by the ambitious projects of PHILIP of MACEDON. On consulting the ruinous effects of perpetual war, and the occasional disputes among them, more than thirty cities came into this league, and yearly sent deputies to THERMOPYLÆ, in order to consult the public welfare, and to settle all differences between them. Something like this was once attempted by HENRY the FOURTH of FRANCE; and had it succeeded agreeably to his wishes, much *European* blood and treasure might have been spared: And perhaps the day is not far off, when nations will discover, that the prospects of a mutual accommodation are sufficient
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to supersede the necessity of war, and so provoke a general confederacy to abolish the horrid practice of spilling the blood of our fellow-creatures. Indeed, were such a confederacy now formed, I am persuaded that all nations might repose themselves in the arms of peace, and their swords grow rusty in their scabbards. Even the codes of LYCURGUS and SOLON would be more congenial to the disposition of mankind at the present day, than the overbearing influence of the various dynasties among men. Never was GREECE so happy as when she was under the control of these celebrated legislators. The institutions of LYCURGUS lasted about seven hundred and fifty years; and however ill-suited they appear to be to the genius and taste of the *Grecians*—yet the people were more flourishing under that than any subsequent Government. Hence we see the necessity of adapting the Government to the habits and dispositions of the people: And as often as time and other circumstances manifest a change in the habits and dispositions of the people, the Government ought to relax or coerce as occasion may require. But here lies the great difficulty, of knowing when it is necessary to strengthen or mitigate the severity of the laws. To do this, requires a profound legislator—one who is possessed of an enlarged mind—who is acquainted with the laws and policy of nations, and who is well skilled in the nature of man. Such, however, was SOLON;

and his skill and judgment enabled him to adapt his laws to the tempers and capacities of the people. The age in which he lived was rather rude—so that we cannot wonder, if some defects should appear in his code, when compared with the codes of our modern free republics: And when this great man once was questioned relative to some defects in his laws, (which he was always sensible of,) he made this memorable reply, *that they were as good as his people would bear*; plainly inculcating this lesson, *that the laws of each country ought to correspond with the manners and dispositions of the people.*

Now if it be clear, that the increase of useful knowledge and the polite arts, has rescued the minds of men from barbarism, and has encouraged the principles of virtue and peace—ought not monarchy, and the rigid laws of our ancestors, to be abolished? I mean such only of the laws, as were made for the punishment of heretics and recusants, and some others, such as the Test and Corporation Acts, Game Laws, &c. which manifestly tend to abridge the liberty of the subject. If the Governments of nations were suddenly done away, and every thing taken up *de novo*, new systems would be established on the charts of the old, declaratory of the principles of liberty and toleration; and the sacred rights of man. But this could not be done without great contention; for however much
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united the minds of men may be in spurning at slavery, and in cherishing freedom and the rights of conscience; yet they will seldom concur as to the means of bringing about these desirable objects. Men see through different optics;—and though they are aiming at the same end, they differ in the means of attaining it. If all matters, in this situation, were left to be debated on among the people, great divisions would arise, and no determination could be had, till the voice of the people could be taken through the medium of representation; and even then, men would widely differ in their opinions: But in such a body the minority must always submit to the majority; and such a large majority will generally be found, as to put an end to the subject under deliberation; though not without being amply investigated. Among the great variety of differences on political questions, some few might prefer a well-regulated monarchy—and the reasons offered in support of the doctrine, might have their due weight. Some might prefer a mixed Government, and every branch so balanced as to preserve a discriminating equipoise. Others again would contend for an overbearing aristocracy; while, perhaps, the great majority would concur in giving the preference to a due mixture of aristocracy and democracy, as the best suited to the habits and dispositions of mankind in the present age. A system of Government, esta-

blished over a free people, is capable of being simplified; and the fundamental principles on which it is founded, give freedom in debate, and indulge the great body of the people in discussing the most interesting concerns of the State: For, as the happiness of the whole is the object of all, it is no more than reasonable, that all should have a share in the formation of laws, which are to bind and govern the community. The constitution and laws of every monarchic state are necessarily multifarious; and as long as the people can be kept in ignorance, the sparks of freedom will seldom light their way to happiness.

IN looking over the code of nations, we find a variety of Governments which are termed *free*. But how can a people be free, when the prerogatives of the monarch are unlimited? The line of distinction between the two kinds of Government, is discovered in nothing more than the weakness of the one, and the superiority of the other, in time of war. This may be discovered by every one who is acquainted with the history of the ancient republics. Those, governed by tyrants and usurpers, seldom made a good stand against their enemies; while the others, possessed of the noble flame of liberty, and who knew its value and importance, proved a terror to their hostile neighbours. This remark may appear the more just, when we call to mind

mind the noble stand which the *Greeks* made against the *Persians*, at the famous battles of THERMOPYLÆ, SALAMIS, and PLATEA. Here was a contest between freemen and slaves; and though the latter more than fifty times exceeded the former in number—yet the love of freedom, and an ardent desire of glory, baffled the efforts of numbers, and triumphed in success. THEMISTOCLES and ARISTIDES, though rivals in power, united in this critical conjuncture to defend their country; and their names are enrolled with lustre in the annals of fame. They lived in a style truly republican, and we find them ridiculing the manners and luxury of the *Persians*. It was, in a great measure, their rigid austerity, which gave them such a manifest advantage over their enemies. They despised the etiquette of the *Persian* kings and nobles; and by living a laborious life, and exposing themselves to fatigue and danger, they acquired the art of war; which was eminently useful to them in the battles we have mentioned. Cowardice, in these free republics, was sometimes punished with death—always with disgrace. Even the only one, who survived LEONIDAS and the three hundred *Greeks*, who devoted themselves to death at the straits of THERMOPYLÆ, on his return to give an account of the sad disaster of his countrymen, was branded with infamy, till fortune put him in a situation
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to retrieve his character, by some extraordinary feats of valour.

FROM this short sketch, we can easily discover the superiority of free Governments over every other in the world. Supineness and lassitude, are the attendants of the one; while vigour and activity mark the character of the other. This is verified from our own observation. The daring and intrepid spirit of the *Americans*, and the enthusiasm of the *French*, can only proceed from freemen; and whoever ridicules the authors of these memorable revolutions, need but recall to mind *the opposition they made to them*, and they will hide their heads in their own disgrace.

As another argument against monarchic Government, I would adduce the inability of writers to support it. Its advocates have hitherto chosen to do it by the sword, rather than by the persuasion of reason; because, though the latter should fail them, they could appeal to the former; and, taking advantage of the ignorance of mankind, they were almost sure of success. But this scheme begins to fail them; reason is breaking through the mists of ignorance, and lighting up the world—the human mind is expanding itself—and is daring enough to prescribe bounds to the prerogative of kings.

MONARCHY

MONARCHY has ever kept pace with ignorance, and freedom with knowledge: Yet in the darkest ages of the world, liberty was frequently an object of adoration, and diligently sought after: But men were so ignorant of the science of Government, and of the means on which their happiness depended, that their exertions were not always attended with success. Here we have only to regret their want of unanimity, and the continual rivalry between the leading men of the state—who were so jealous of each other, as to baffle the wisest schemes for the public good, merely to depress and to render odious the projector of them. Nevertheless, amid the continual broils to which they were liable, we find some of their most celebrated legislators reasoning upon the nature of Government, and manifesting a vast extent and precision of political knowledge; and most of them arguing in favour of free Governments. If free Governments at that period were the most likely to secure the happiness of mankind, the argument operates still more strongly at the present day—in exact proportion as knowledge has increased. PLUTARCH has handed down to us a conversation of ancient sages, disputing upon the following question: What is the most perfect kind of Government? To which they made the following answers. SOLON said it was that, *where an injury done to an individual, was felt by the whole*: BIAS—*where law reigns instead*
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of a monarch: THALES—where the inhabitants are neither too rich nor too poor: ANACHARSIS—where virtue is honoured, and vice detected: PITTACUS—where dignities are conferred only upon the deserving, and never upon the wicked: CLEOBULUS—where people are more afraid of censure than the law: CHILO—where the laws, and not orators, are hearkened to, and have influence. Though there is an evident distinction among these various systems; yet they all tend to one fundamental point—to an equal Government; and when we see that the ancients entertained such accurate notions, we at once regret that, instead of soaring in theory, they had not aimed at reducing their speculations to practice.

EVERY branch of Government ought to have as many checks and balances, without impeding its operations, as the nature of it will admit; for corruption and venality will seldom find their way, where the avarice of men is checked by the fear of detection. Sensible of this, the Spartans established the Ephori, consisting of five magistrates, annually chosen, with power to cashier, imprison, and even, if necessity required it, to put to death the senators. The Ephori generally consisted of the ablest and wisest of the people—of those revered for their virtue and morals—their age and experience—and they were even considered as the fathers of their country. If such a body of men were established

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in *England*, to watch the criminality of Ministers, and to correct the abuses of the State, no one would dare to corrupt the elections, or to accept of a seat when chosen—unless his conduct was marked with integrity; no one would dare to prescribe bounds to religious worship—or attempt to control the intercourse between God and man—a severity unequalled by the Inquisition of *Spain*—or the bloody edict of *Nantz*.

DISCORD is the parent of dissolution. United, we stand: Divided, we fall. Unanimity will enable us to accomplish the freedom of the human race; and sweep away the tyrants of the earth as with the besom of destruction.

THE END.